

LENTEN
SERMONS

by
JOHN TALBOT SMITH

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LENTEN SERMONS

of

THE HOLY YEAR

by

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Author of

"THE CHAPLAIN'S SERMONS," "THE TRAINING OF
A PRIEST," "BROTHER AZARIAS," "SARANAC,"
"A WOMAN OF CULTURE," ETC. :: :: :: :: ::



NEW YORK
WILLIAM H. YOUNG & COMPANY
27 BARCLAY STREET
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Feb. 23, 1900

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The Son of God.

*What think you of Christ? Whose Son is he?—Matt.
xxii. 42.*

OUTLINE.

1. Particularly in the Lenten season the earnest Christian should ask himself this pertinent question : What do I think of Christ ?
2. To the believer it seems a superfluous and an easy question, but it has puzzled many, who tried in vain to answer it.
3. Sound opinion must be based on sound knowledge ; to answer this first question well, you must answer another : What do you know about Jesus ?
4. The infallible Church alone can give a clear and true account of His nature, His history, and His work.
5. As to His nature, the Church teaches that He is the God-Man : the Son of God and the Son of Mary.
6. As to His history, the Church teaches that He lived and died like other men, but raised Himself from death, ascended to His Father in heaven, and will come again to judge mankind at the end of time.
7. As to His work, the Church teaches that He founded her, and gave into her keeping the Sacraments, for the salvation of men.
8. He lives now, not only in heaven, but in the bosom of His Church.
9. In another sense He also lives and works in His priests and His people who keep His faith and observe His commandments.
10. With this knowledge provided by the Church, and a study of one's life, the question can be properly answered.

I. THE DIFFICULTY OF THE QUESTION.

1. MEN are better prepared to discuss important questions of the soul in seasons like Lent, because the current of life then runs toward

seriousness, all Catholics are more or less affected by the religious solemnities of the time, and the very atmosphere is charged with spiritual electricity. The shadow of the Passion falls over our life, the long shadow of Calvary embraces the whole world. The lonely figure which hung on the cross of Calvary is still the wonder and the mystery of men, as He was in the hour of His shame and His dying. Every earnest soul, seeking for the truth, or in actual possession of it, must at some moment of his career pass before the Christ nailed to the cross and have the solemn question put to him: What do you think of Jesus Christ? Whose Son is He? As he answers it, his future will be upward to heaven or downward to hell. "Who will grant me that I might know and find him and come even to his throne?"—Job xxiii. 3. "He shall kiss the lips, who answereth right words."—Prov. xxiv. 26.

2. The Catholic thinks it an easy question to answer. He would say promptly with St. Peter: "We have believed and have known that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."—John vi. 10. Yet Christ seems to have thought it a difficult question in proposing it to the Pharisees. They thought it easy to answer, and were caught badly by their own response. They gave their opinion practically to the whole world when they condemned the Son of God as an impostor

and nailed Him to the cross. They had been studying the Messiah for centuries, as the prophecies of the Bible revealed Him, and yet when He appeared among them, answering perfectly to all that had been foretold concerning Him, their wits were not able to recognize Him. Thus has it been with innumerable souls since the resurrection. One teacher declared that Christ became the Son of God only at His baptism by John of the desert. Another was convinced that God could never condescend to put on human nature; therefore Christ was not a human being at all, but only a phantom of human form, by means of which men might see with the eyes of the flesh the divinity. A third taught that He was no more than a man inspired by the mighty Spirit of God. A fourth declared that Christ was both God and man, and that there were two persons in Him, the divine and the human; God the Father claiming the one, and Mary the Virgin the other. In our times the great multitude outside the Church hardly know what answer to make to the question, since their leaders and teachers are all at sea themselves; but the general belief is that Christ was the son of Joseph and Mary, and the greatest genius, the noblest product of the human race. To this belief a few have added the circumstance that too much mentality had destroyed His prudence, and incipient insanity led to His down-

fall. With such a variety of answers recorded in history and visible in the lives of our very neighbors, it becomes clear that the question is not so easily answered. "And John called to him two of his disciples, and sent them to Jesus, saying: Art thou he that art to come, or look we for another?"—Luke vii. 19.

3. Before an opinion can be formed some knowledge of the subject in hand must be acquired. What do we know of Christ? It is possible the Pharisees would put us to shame on that point, for they had studied everything that could give them information about Him. Their inability to recognize Him when He appeared before them and made His claim for recognition arose from the fact that they had formed a theory of His appearance, doctrines, and methods which did not have room for the true Son of God. The humble son of the carpenter, devoted to poverty and the preaching of the Gospel to the poor, scorning the wealth, the pride, the power of aristocracy, and relying solely on the power of God for the regeneration of man, was a far different personage from the mighty prince, warrior, and statesman who was, in their thought, to lead the Jewish nation to earthly glory. Their knowledge of Him was insufficient and incorrect. The learned men of all times have never agreed about Him, and the information with which they supply us leads only to

confusion. History describes Him as a wonder-worker, a teacher of great truths, a genius of the highest order; it records His declarations of His own nature, character, and mission; it follows the course of His ideas in the growth of Christianity; but it settles none of the questions which naturally rise from His teaching. There is in consequence a great difficulty in learning anything positive and conclusive about Him which might determine and shape individual conduct in His regard. How, then, are we to form an opinion about Him? In the general confusion we must remain silent; even to that most important question, whose son was He, we are at a loss what answer to make, if we have to depend upon ourselves alone. Therefore quite naturally we turn to that Church which He founded for sure and correct information. We have His own word that it can make no mistake regarding Him and His doctrine. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. xvi. 18. "I am with you [the Church] all days, even to the consummation of the world."—Matt. xxviii. 20. "And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."—Matt. xviii. 17. "He that heareth you, heareth me."—Luke x. 16. Before forming our opinion, then, and accepting the paternity of Christ, let us hear what the Church teaches concerning Jesus Christ.

II. THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH.

1. The learned have been unable to agree as to the nature and character of Christ, and have left only confusion behind them. "They are all confounded and ashamed; the forgers of error are gone together into confusion."—Isa. xlv. 16. Mark, then, the clearness of statement adhered to at all times in the declarations of the Church concerning her Lord. She teaches, first, as to His Personality, that He is the actual Son of the living God, the Second Person in that mysterious Trinity which rules the universe. There is no ambiguity in the use of the word Son. It means just what it says. Christ is the actual Son of the true God, of the same substance as His Father, of the same nature, equal to the Father in all things. The heretics have called Him the Son of the Father, but like the tricksters most of them have been, they juggled with the words. "And they have bent their tongue, as a bow, for lies, and not for truth."—Jer. ix. 3. We are all the sons of God, inasmuch as He made us; we are doubly His children when we love and worship Him; and Christ was the Son of the Father in the highest sense, according to the heretics, because "it was his meat and drink to do the will of him that sent him." The Church does not juggle with its language. She teaches that Christ was the Son of God in all

that the phrase implies and contains. He was God as well as Man. In Him were united the two natures, the human and the divine. He honored His creatures by taking a body and a soul like theirs, and He took the human form in the womb of His sweet Mother, after the fashion of nature. Therefore do we understand and love Him the more, because He was of our race and fashion, a man. There was no ambiguity about His personality. He is one person, not two, as some would have Him. They made themselves ridiculous by such teaching, but the Church saved mankind from further ridicule by rejecting the teaching. "And you, O children of Zion, rejoice and be joyful in the Lord your God; because he hath given you a teacher of justice, and he will make the early and the latter rain to come down to you as in the beginning."—Joel ii. 23.

2. The Church teaches, in the second place, that He lived, suffered, and died as a man lives, suffers, and dies. Christ was not a phantom, nor a senseless rock, which went through the actions of life without feeling of joy or of pain, simply to make an impression on His fellows. He was flesh and blood, His sorrows were deep and bitter, and His tears were the brine that affliction forces from the broken hearts of men. He accepted the circumstances of His life with resignation; its obscurity, its brevity, its con-

cluding glory, and its mournful shame, the shame of the cross; and He accepted also, which is hardest for all of us, the accompanying pain and shame which His unhappy fate brought to His Mother and His friends. He died in wretchedness, because the law of sin so ordained it; the pride of man always crucifies the force that would destroy that pride. He died on the cross because the leader of the human race, which finds death its greatest cross, was to turn death into a resurrection, where before it meant extinction. "There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness; and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of him; despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity."—Isa. liii. 2, 3. The Church teaches in the face of the wrangling crowd that within three days of His death the God-Man raised Himself by His own power to life again, and for forty days displayed Himself to His disciples that they might have no doubt of His resurrection from death to everlasting life. He destroyed the mystery which up to that time had hung about death. He revealed and made clear the reality of the life after death, the existence of heaven. He returned to His Father from the actual presence of His disciples, after assuring them that He would come again to judge the world.

3. In the third place, the Church teaches, as to His work, that Christ founded the Church before He left the earth, and gave into her charge the seven Sacraments, for the earthly comfort and the heavenly glory of mankind. "Having loved his own, who were in the world, he loved them unto the end."—John xiii. 1. He would not leave His followers to the wolves of passion and of injustice, to be torn from without and within. He was determined that to the end of time each soul that loved Him, no matter how remote in time or place from Judea of the first century, should be in constant and loving communication with Himself through His glorious Church and His wonderful Sacraments. How He accomplished this we all know from our own experience. From the cradle to the last limit of purgatory the Church has guarded her children; from youth to death they have been fed on the body and blood of Christ. Under the injustices of sinners they have been taught to be patient, even until the judgment, in the firm faith that Christ will render justice to the wrongers and the wronged. Such in brief is the teaching of the Church with regard to the Christ. How clear, how complete, how beautiful, how consistent is this exposition of the nature and life of the Lord, when viewed by itself! But how it rises to the heights of heaven in sublimity, when we compare it with the numberless expositions

of the shouting mob outside the Church; the mob of all the centuries, theologians and philosophers, scientists and litterateurs, demagogues, charlatans, popular preachers, and madmen, who recall the words of Christ: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."—Matt. vii. 15. "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if possible) even the elect. Behold I have told it to you beforehand. If therefore they shall say to you: Behold he is in the desert; go ye not out: Behold he is in the closets, believe it not."—Matt. xxiv. 24-26.

III. THE EVER-LIVING CHRIST.

1. Our knowledge of Christ would be incomplete if we were not also able to tell where He is at the present moment. The mere question raises a babble of voices. The false teachers and their following cry out that His ashes have long ago mingled with the blessed earth of Palestine, and His memory alone lives. The sects of Protestantism cry out that He lives under each of their ever-increasing and nebulous creeds. He is not with them, the squirming scissions of ancient heresy. The clear voice of the Church rises over the din of the charlatans: "Behold

I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.”—Matt. xxviii. 20. In the beginning He founded the Church, He declared her the mistress of the nations, and He has kept His promise to guard her from error, from decay, from death, and to remain with her forever. The calm, unprejudiced eye of good sense looks from this majestic Church standing on the hill-tops of time, to the kicking, sprawling, roaring heretics building mud-hovels on the plain below, and calling them the everlasting temples of Christ. If there be an everlasting Christ, decides the unreligious observer, He lives and works in the Church of Rome. It is the inevitable conclusion. Christ is with His Church in this century, as in the first. He dwells, as we know, on her altars, and lives in daily association of the most loving kind with His children. Wherever the Church is, there is the Christ. “Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me.”—John xvii. 24.

2. He is also to be found wherever His faithful priest preaches His Gospel to man. “As thou hast sent me into the world, I have also sent them into the world.”—John xvii. 18. The priest is His representative, and he carries with him the credentials of the Christ. From his hands the wonderful Sacraments spring into life and fill souls with courage, light, joy, and resig-

nation. At his word sin flies, and the peace of God enters wearied hearts. He is indeed another Christ. His presence and his work bring the Church into each household and into each heart that receives him. St. Patrick fills Ireland with light and joy, St. Francis Xavier illumines and glorifies distant Japan, St. Vincent de Paul sets France and the world on fire with charity. What these great priests accomplished on a grand scale, the priest of the mission repeats for his little flock. And the people recognize in him the true representative of the Lord. They seek him out in all their trials and make him carry part of their burdens. He is at their side in all the trying moments of life: in the sick-room, in the death-chamber, comforting the broken heart, healing many wounds, bringing back the wayward child, stirring up the slow and feeble, pointing always to that heaven which is the harbor of earth's pilgrimage. Thus we have the Christ, not only in the Church, not only on our altars in person, veiled by the bread and wine, but moving about amongst us daily, scattering the blessings of grace everywhere, delighting us by his human sympathies, and taking from the loneliest souls the keenness of desolation, in the fact that one friend has a personal interest in them for the sake of the loving Christ. "Say to Aaron and his sons: Thus shall you bless the children of Israel, and you shall

say to them : The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord shew his face to thee, and have mercy on thee. The Lord turn his countenance on thee, and give thee peace.”—Num. vi. 23–26.

3. In conclusion, Christ may also be said to be wherever any child of His carries on the good fight against the forces of sin and error. “Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?”—1 Cor. iii. 16. Every true Christian is the representative of Christ to all men, inasmuch as the life of Christ shines through his. Now, with all that has been taught us by Christ and His Church concerning His nature, history, and work, we are prepared to answer the question asked at the beginning: What think you of Christ? Whose Son is He? Faith has taught us that He is the Son of God. We have no doubt on that point, because the Church has so declared. But what do you think of the Christ? It is not enough to say promptly: I believe He is the Son of God. The lips are indeed ready, but how does your daily conduct match the declaration of faith made by the lips? Does that conduct declare as clearly as your lips that you believe Christ to be the Son of God? For example, Luther declared the divinity of Christ while engaged in destroying the only witness to that divinity in the world, the Church. The man of business, so wrapped up in money-making that he forgets

religious duties, family duties, and the poor, believes with his lips, but has little belief in his heart. So every sinner may cry loudly his belief in Christ, while his sins flatly contradict his words. Because to believe in Christ truly, to accept Him as the Son of God, means that you accept the truth of His teachings, the necessity of their daily use, the certainty of all their consequences. Your life must speak more loudly than your lips that you believe in the Christ. "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. vii. 21. This question is asked of every man at least once in his life. It will be asked once again in judgment, and the record of our lives will be the answer, which will tell all heaven what we have thought of the Christ. Let no one be so foolish as to wait for judgment to make the first practical answer. "For what shall I do when God shall rise to judge? And when he shall examine, what shall I answer him?"—Job xxxi. 14. At the supreme moment we cannot remain silent before our Judge; we must be able to cry out with Peter: "We have known and have believed that thou art Christ, the Son of God."

The Fold of Christ.

And there shall be one fold and one shepherd.—John x. 16.

OUTLINE.

1. At this moment, as at the beginning of her history, the Church shows the same elements of organization.
2. She outlives leaders, theories, systems, governments, races, and nations, yet keeps the beauty and vitality of youth.
3. Christ founded her to deal with all mankind in the matter of salvation.
4. Therefore the Church is visible, universal, and indefectible.
5. She is a spotless unity, having authority, infallible and invincible.
6. To belittle her before men, false teachers ridicule the ideas of church and creed.
7. For the same purpose they teach that one church is as good as another, and that the Church of Christ is invisible.
8. And they decry the priesthood of man as an affront upon the dignity of man's nature.
9. Their sophistries ruin individuals, but affect the Church nothing, which is to-day as strong and beautiful as when first she became the bride of Christ.

I. THE CHURCH'S HISTORY.

1. Two things are remarkably clear in the history of the true Church of Christ. The first is that her organization is essentially the same now as on the day of Pentecost. Look into the upper room in Jerusalem, where sat Mary, Peter and the other apostles, and many of the

disciples, breathing the sacred fire of the Holy Spirit, and speaking in divers tongues of the wonderful works of God. What do we behold? Peter, the first Pope; John, James, and the rest, the first bishops; the disciples of Christ, the first Christians; and Mary, the honored and beloved Mother of God, now mother and guardian of this new household of the Church, as she had been of the lovely household of Galilee. Look over the world at this moment for the modern counterpart of this first body of Christians, this earliest form of the Church, and where do you behold it? Only in that great organization whose head is the Pope, the successor of St. Peter; whose leaders are the bishops in strict and loving communion with the Pope; whose people are the millions confessing the Christ; whose beloved mistress is Mary the Mother of God. Contrast with that group in the upper chamber the wriggling sects of the Christian world, who are all shouting the name of Christ in different tones, and you find them rejecting Peter to worship Paul, or condemning the leadership of the apostles as an invention of the devil, or ready to curse the very name of the Mother of God. They have not a single feature, not an accidental likeness, which would bring them into relationship with the Church of the first Pentecost. "But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there shall

be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition, and deny the Lord who bought them; bringing upon themselves swift destruction."—2 Peter ii. 1.

2. The second clear fact in the history of the Church is her endurance through the ages. With what pride and comfort the heart of faith glows when this wonderful victory over change and time and trial rises like a sun before the mind! Its glory confounds all her enemies and fills them with humiliation. Greece and Rome are gone, the old races have disappeared with their governments, with their ideas, philosophies, arts, sciences. Charlemagne and his empire are dust, new nations have taken the places of the old; Arius and the heresiarchs and their errors are mere names of history; Luther is denied by his children in all except insensate hatred of the Church; and still the Church is living. "They shall perish but thou remainest: and all of them shall grow old like a garment: and as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art always the self-same, and thy years shall not fail."—Ps. ci. 27, 28. The face of the world has been made over many times by the shifting of races and the schemes of statesmen; the ideas of men have swung from one end of the pendulum to the other again and again; all sorts of remedies for evil and recipes for happiness have been recom-

mended and tried, in place of the old remedy, grace, and the old recipe, the love and service of Christ; and the old Church has looked upon them all as the sun looks upon the clouds of morning. The heaviest and darkest and strongest of them have been at most only a little dust and vapor. Her calm face looks down upon us to-day without contempt for our littleness, with only pity for the present makers of clouds and rain. All that she knew and loved and pitied in her youth have passed into nothingness, while she remains young in beauty and vitality, as strong, as fleet, as active, as productive, as loving as in the far-off days when her womb gave to the world Francis of Assisi and Teresa of Spain. "And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light, and kings in the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thy eyes round about and see: all these are gathered together, they are come to thee: thy sons shall come from afar, and thy daughters shall rise up at thy side."—Isa. lx. 3, 4.

II. HER CHARACTERISTICS.

1. The questions naturally provoked in believer and unbeliever alike by this grand institution are related to the qualities which have given the Church such endurance and such power. What are her characteristics? What are her powers? The faithful know that they

are not human, but divine, the gift of Christ to His bride. He founded the Church to embody, teach, and enforce the truths of man's nature and destiny, just as men found a society to supply the needs of the social man, and to enable him to fulfil his destiny on earth. As men by their nature deal only with men, with the concrete, even where the object of their dealing may be abstract, immaterial, and spiritual things, Christ founded His Church upon a man. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church." His Church is a society of men, with officers, offices, rules; and men can deal with them as consciously and as successfully as with any civic organization. Pope, congregation, cardinal, bishop, and priest are visible, approachable; when a man has dealt with the Church, he can swear to it in court, and the court will accept his declaration, since all men know of the existence of the Church of Rome. "And thy gates shall be open continually: they shall not be shut day nor night, that the strength of the Gentiles may be brought to thee, and their kings may be brought."—Isa. lx. 11. He has not been dealing with the angels, nor with the spirits of the vast deep, nor with the abstractions of philosophers. Christ made the matter of dealing with Himself possible for all ages, for all circumstances, for all peoples. He is easier of access than any monarch or ruler, and His

children can approach Him with more familiarity and ease than the children use in dealing with their human father. Keeping this fact in mind, it will be easy to understand and appreciate the qualities with which the Saviour endowed the Church. "Thou shalt no more have the sun for thy light by day, neither shall the brightness of the moon enlighten thee: but the Lord shall be with thee for an everlasting light, and thy God for thy glory."—Isa. lx. 19.

2. First of all, the Church is visible. That quality can be appreciated better when we see the hole in which the Protestant sects are living to-day, for lack of any one organization among them with power to speak for all the scissions of the Lutheran heresy. You can deal with the Anglicans, the Episcopalians, the Methodists, and so on down the list, but you cannot find any corporate existence of the thing called Protestantism. Its leaders have tried to explain the unhappy condition by making the entire Church an invisibility, but this has not worked well in the cold, hard world; and the contrast with the visible Church of Christ has lost to heresy many an adherent and gained souls to Christ. Not only is the Church visible to the human eye; she is also universal. The earth is her heritage, and her apostles never lost any time in claiming and working her estate. From the days of the tireless St. Paul to this day of Dom Bosco the

Church has had her representatives among all peoples. At this moment there is no country outside the pale of her influence, there are no missions like her missions, and heresy has to face her legions, no matter how strongly entrenched it may be. With the characteristics of visibility and universality goes that of indefectibility. She can never fail, she has never failed to this hour. Two thousand years old almost, and her beauty is that of the immortals, her perfection celestial, her force divine. How beautiful is she in herself, and how beautiful in contrast with the new and limited creeds that contort themselves out of any shape in the vain effort to imitate her beauty, age, and power! They are the sport of the intelligent and the learned in these foolish attempts toward a greatness which error can never attain even in the lower form of simulation. "And Moab shall be a derision, and an example to all round about him."—Jer. xlviii. 39.

3. There is no germ of disintegration in the Church, no stain of death. She is spotlessness and unity. It is well for the sinners of earth that an end comes soon to their sinning, lest they turn out monsters. Immortality is the gift only of the sinless. The seed of death, begotten of sin, was in the old nations. They have all passed away. Sin has never soiled the Church, and she lives forever. Her unity is such that the

Catholic is never at a loss in dealing with her, no matter in what part of the world he may happen to be. Like the different nationalities who heard the first sermon of the first Pope, and heard each his own language, Catholics of all tongues can assist at the sacrifice of the Mass and therein worship the same Lord, can receive the Sacraments and live in active communion with their brethren of any race. The Church possesses real authority and exercises it. She is not bound by the prejudices of nations or individuals, since she is above them all. Her laws are obeyed, her bishops and priests are respected and revered, her doctrines are the support of civilization, and her moral and spiritual powers are the prop of modern governments. She is infallible in her teachings, and can make no mistake in the instruction with which she provides the people. The great heretics laughed at her infallibility one after another, from Arius to Luther; and from Julian to Voltaire the great sceptics have foretold her destruction. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord, and against his Christ."—Ps. ii. 2. She buried them and their doctrines and sneers, and is still found teaching the same doctrines with ancient vigor, as if Arius, Luther, Julian, and Voltaire had never been. For she is invincible. She had to be. All men in turn have fought her, and

the bitterest enemies have been found among her own children. She has had to defend the truth, to enforce the truth, to defend the helpless against the strong, to build up modern society and then maintain it against itself. The fight would have been too much for any institution less than divine. Regard the long line of heroes, monarchs, statesmen, geniuses, who in turn sought to destroy her, to use her as their tool. They are gone "like the dust, which the wind driveth from the face of the earth."—Ps. i. 4. They are dust and ashes; and she lives, still invincible, still universal, still infallible, a spotless unity. "For thou hast maintained my judgment and my cause: thou hast sat on the throne, who judgest justice."—Ps. ix. 5.

III. THE TRICKS OF HER ENEMIES.

1. Her enemies have been unable to destroy her by force in the past; therefore in our times they try to destroy her by trickery. "And they that sought evils to me spoke vain things, and studied deceits all the day long."—Ps. xxxvii. 13). In pompous and fiery language they ridicule the ideas of church and creed, and declare that man is by nature above the littleness of such things. It is a boast with them now that they are larger than the creeds, and accept a church only in so far as it appreciates them.

This is correct and fitting language, while they apply it to the churches and creeds of the sects. Certainly man is above the narrowness of *their* limits, and superior to *their* errors, which only hinder his progress and cloud his happiness. They are the mushrooms of a night. The oldest of the sects is still younger than the day-old infant, for their doctrines take on a new meaning every sunrise. But the Church of Christ and its creed are the noblest and oldest things in the modern world. Both have the majesty of their origin, which is divine; and both enjoy the distinction of a long history, of having withstood the severest tests which time and malice can bring against the truth. "And there shall be a firmament on the earth on the tops of mountains, above Libanus shall the fruit thereof be exalted: and they of the city shall flourish like the grass of the earth."—Ps. lxxi. 16. The Church is a society of human beings, and its aims, its principles of action, its convictions, are expressed in its creed. The United States is a society, and its creed is a collection of documents embracing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. We do not hear many Americans boasting of their superiority to their country or being above its creed. When they arrive at that point of scorn it is time for them to sever connection with America and seek elsewhere for their ideals. But they

do not mean what they say. Finding it impossible to shake this grand edifice of the old Church, and beyond hope to equal or to imitate it, they attack it in its very essence by a pretence of spiritual grandeur in rejecting little things like churches and creeds. "And their days were consumed in vanity, and their years in haste."—Ps. lxxvii. 33.

2. For a similar reason they are loud in declaring that one church is as good as another. They do not accept this statement for their own favorites among the sectarian churches, since few Anglicans consider the Dissenters their equals; the Episcopalians frown upon the Methodists, the Methodists feel much above the Shakers, and the Shakers keep far away from the rest of the world. What is really meant by the phrase, one church is as good as another, is that any little miserable offshoot of heresy, born this week, as well as the greater offshoots, is as good as the sublime Church of Christ. "They have spoken against me with deceitful tongues."—Ps. cviii. 3. No one ventures to put it so plainly, because men smile at such claims. What! the shifty thing called Anglicanism, confined to England and begotten by Henry VIII., equal to the structure reared upon the rock of Peter! The roaring Salvation Army, the lively and howling children of John Wesley, the cast-iron Presbyterians, all born within a century or

two, limited to one or two races and the confines of a state, are compared with this majestic Mistress of time and place and history! The absurdity of the claim is relieved by its humor; for we cannot be angered, we can laugh heartily, when the milkweed shoulders the oak of Pharamond and talks of one tree being as good as another. A subtler form of the same trick is the common declaration of the sects that Christ is the invisible Head of the invisible Church; that this invisible Church is one, holy, universal, indefectible, and so on, although its manifestation in one thousand sects is hopelessly divided and still dividing, often unholy, never universal, and ready to vanish at any time. "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; the venom of asps is under their lips."—Ps. cxxxix. 4. Unable to imitate the true Church in her majestic and visible unity, the clever theologians invented the myth called the invisible Church, of which the sects, like the under side of a tapestry, are supposed to be the wrong side. This is poetic and also humorous, but is rarely thought of by the average soul when he turns from the ever-multiplying sects to contemplate the universal magnificence of the Church of Christ.

3. Finally, in their lofty scorn of Church, creed, unity, and visibility the enemies of the Church include the ministry of the priesthood.

They would not stoop to receive the grace of God from the hands of men like themselves; in which point their feelings can be reciprocated. *They* would not lower the nature given them by God by receiving the sacraments, or any ministration of grace, from the hands of men. They go further, and would decline them from the angels. *They* do not believe that Christ could ever have dreamed of raising mere men to the heights seized by Pope, prelate, and priest. No, a thousand times, no! Christ alone is worthy to deal out His grace to men. He alone is the minister; and He made man of such dignity that only God can worthily serve so exalted a nature in the matter of salvation. They forget that man is ministered to chiefly by men, and takes very kindly to the service. They themselves did not reject their mother's milk, nor their father's bread, nor the nurse's care; they have cheerfully availed themselves of the lawyer's skill, and the physician's; they may have often welcomed a banker's mediation; they have accepted their release from judges with joy, and bowed to back-breaking before the lords of the earth. Their own gospel was accepted from Henry VIII., Martin Luther, John Wesley, John Knox, and others; and they claim to have received most of it from Peter and the other apostles. The baptism which most of them have rejected was once accepted from

the hands of ministers who believed it to be a sacrament. Why, then, should it be beneath human dignity to receive the ministration of a priesthood? Alas! here is another trick by which they hope to bring down the famous Catholic priesthood, so strong, so beautiful, so invincible, to the level of the preachers. What they cannot become they decry. The trick is of a piece with the others. "Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain; and after the error of Balaam they have for reward poured out themselves, and have perished in the contradiction of love."—Jude i. 11.

4. Heresy changes and dies only to be succeeded by fresh heresy. A new and fanciful theory is often preferred to the old truth. It has been so from the beginning. Yet one would think that man had enough sense left in him after centuries of experience to appreciate on human grounds alone the great Church towering over the past and the present. It is the one work, man having a share in it, which has survived the cataclysms that destroyed all institutions of ancient times. It remains a living and tremendous force in the world. Only the few acknowledge its present power and past service. Through prejudice or hatred the multitude of intelligent people outside the Church forget that this force made the civilization of to-day. Therefore we, the faithful children of the

Church, must make up by our devotion for the harshness of our brethren. It is not the beautiful age, nor the undimmed splendor, nor the magnificent history of our holy Mother that wins our hearts; but rather are we won by the tenderness of this dear bride of the Christ. Never was bride so sweet and pure, never was mother so tender. We can pity our separated brethren for the misfortune which has deprived them for centuries of her care. They have felt the deprivation, poor orphans, without knowing its cause; but at this moment we can hear their piteous cry for that unity of belief and custom which fulfils the promise of Christ, that there shall be one fold and one shepherd. Their desolation has reached its climax, and we can hope that the morning dawns when the holy Mother will gather all her lost children to her bosom. "And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself with them shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away."—Apoc. xxi. 2-4.

The Soul of Man.

What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?—Mark viii. 36.

OUTLINE.

1. Has man an immortal soul? is the great question of the time. The answer of the sages.
2. The teaching of the Church on the same question.
3. The freethinkers declare that man can never be persuaded of his immortality, and give powerful illustrations of their contention.
4. Nevertheless this doctrine is the basis of modern civilization, and informs every part of it.
5. The glory which the immortal soul sheds upon the earthly life of man.
6. That earthly life should be one grand preparation for eternity.
7. Yet thousands train their souls as if eternity were a potato-field.
8. They fight and die for prizes which dead hands cannot hold, which must go to others.
9. Thus they provide infidels with arguments against the true nature and awful dignity of the human soul.

I. THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

1. It appears that the number of those who deny the human soul immortality is increasing, and as a consequence the question of immortality becomes very important. It is discussed in the fields and the workshops by the most ignorant, and by the most learned in the salons of

the world. So closely does it touch the interests and the feelings of each man that it has always been a question of profound charm. Are we only higher animals, whose destiny is fulfilled on this planet, or have we here only the threshold of a career which brings man to the dignity of the immortals? "Son of man, dost thou think these bones shall live? And I answered: O Lord God, thou knowest."—Ezech. xxxvii. 3. The sages of ancient times, like Socrates and Plato, the poets of the early nations, and the prophets of the Hebrews, all declared their belief or opinion or hope in a life beyond time, where man might lead an existence suited to his ideals and his desires. Christ, considering Him merely as the Sage of sages, crowned their declarations by His plain teaching that the soul is immortal, that earth is nothing compared to heaven, that eternity holds everlasting dwellings for the just and the unjust. The noblest and wisest teachers of mankind have favored or held the doctrine of the eternal life. "And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have opened your sepulchres, and shall have brought you out of your graves, O my people."—Ezech. xxxvii. 13.

2. Reason teaches us much concerning the nature of man, but without the revelation of Christ, contained in His own utterances and the teachings of the Church, our knowledge of the matter

would be confused and uncertain. It is interesting, therefore, to learn precisely what the Church teaches of man's nature. Every child acquainted with the catechism learns that man is a creature composed of a body and a soul, made to God's likeness; and that this likeness rests on his faculties of understanding and free will, and his quality of immortality. Man is endowed with a memory which has not its like on earth; and no other animal even approaches him in the grandeur of that faculty. He has an understanding which explores the heights of heaven and the depths of hell, which removes him almost entirely out of the class animal, and enables him to reach even to the infinite. He has a free will which enables him to control all his actions and to direct them at his pleasure; it frees him from the slavery of instinct, passion, appetite, and environment. He shows his immortal nature by his longings for things which neither his own nature nor the earth contains. He seems to be satisfied with nothing less than the eternal and infinite God. His faculties are far superior to the needs of his earthly condition; and therefore the materialists have found it necessary to deny that he possesses free will, understanding, and memory, as Catholics understand these things. The animals have just enough will, memory, and understanding to live their small lives. The Chris-

tian asserts that man has infinitely more than he uses or can use in earthly living. The free-thinkers have the trouble of proving Catholics to be wrong. The Church opposes all their declarations with the simple and comprehensive statement that man is like to God. What a delightful and uplifting doctrine: that the children are like the father, and must go to Him for the long sweet days of eternity! "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou hast made him a little less than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honor; and hast set him over the works of thy hands."—Ps. viii. 5, 6.

3. Of this you can never persuade the human race, cry the freethinkers. Look at the history of the world, past and present; what wars, seditions, massacres, crimes, turmoils, labors, whose present clamor fills the heaven; and what has been their object? To gain heaven? Rather to gain hell, if there be such a place! Take such a case as Napoleon's. He is a fair instance of the average genius. He had the faith of the Catholic in his youth, but his genius led him to empire and St. Helena rather than to the moral life and a holy ending. Take the average young man of any time, and consider his life in the very face of Christian training. Lust and drink mark his youth, and money-making his maturity and age. He is steadied only by marriage,

or ambition, or interest, or an injection of good sense, or by human love, but he is rarely influenced by the idea of immortality. Heaven is strange to him; he fears death as the end of all, and would willingly live while life has pleasures. In health and prosperity few men care much for the immortality of the Christians. Why? Because it is only a fiction of the priests, has no place in the scheme of existence, and therefore no influence naturally on man's mind. A better explanation is, perhaps, that immortality seems too good to be true, and too far off to be of immediate importance. But the freethinker is more promptly answered by inviting him to a second look at the history of the past and the present. Behold the wise and the good of all ages, the holy ones of Israel, the clean of heart in all ages; account for Peter and John, Augustine, Benedict, Francis, Columbus, Washington; explain the hermits, monks, and nuns of each age, the Crusaders, the millions of faithful Christians; interpret the growth of the Church, the sending out of missionaries into dangerous countries, the building of churches and charities, the education of millions of children. One argument is fairly balanced by the other. Men are by reason and by nature more inclined to accept the immortal life than to deny it. The pure in heart have as strong a tendency toward heaven as the impure have toward earth.

The soul is of its nature inclined to high flight like the eagle, and even if religion never enlightened it would seek the peaks of the eternal world. It was a physician of Philadelphia who tried to prove that some men had immortal souls, while others had not, so convinced was he from experience that immortality alone could account for some phenomena in the nature of man. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior."—Luke i. 46, 47.

II. THE DESTINY OF THE SOUL.

1. After all, it is only a shallow thinker, a purblind observer, that could discover in our social life an argument against the doctrine of immortality. So convinced have men been of its truth that civilization has its very roots in it. It is the source of that democracy which is a mark of the Catholic Church, for the immortal soul makes all men equal by nature, without any regard to the physical condition. The prince and the beggar, the genius and the idiot, have precisely the same rights and privileges before God. "For there is no respect of persons with God."—Rom. ii. 11. The Church throws open her highest positions to any child of man that can fill them creditably. Her Popes, prelates, nuncios, priests have been mostly the chil-

dren of peasants. No one is denied the Sacraments on account of social inferiority. It is the soul with which the Church of Christ deals, and there are no degrees in its immortality. Hence the missionaries seem to prefer by a divine instinct the most neglected and helpless races for the exercise of their charity, and seek them out in Greenland and China without regard to personal trials and dangers. They incur incredible hardships merely to baptize a few wretched infants whose parents have flung them out to die. The sense of immortality which is thus cultivated in men is the source of that courage which animates at certain times the Catholic body. The martyr smiles at the threats and the rewards of the persecutor; the patriot fights for his country to the last, knowing that he has nothing to lose here or hereafter; the great priest dies in exile unconquered, like Hildebrand, or at the foot of the altar, triumphant, like Thomas à Becket; the Crusaders throw their lives away recklessly in the defence of the Holy Land and of Europe. The body of laws which rules modern society was born of Christian faith and thought. The respect paid to the human body as the temple of the immortal soul displays itself in those laws: in the enactments against slavery, against unjust employers fostering indirect serfdom, against mutilation of the human body; in behalf of the poor, sick,

and distressed; in the care of the orphans, the unborn children, the burial-places for the dead. We have only to contrast the modern with the ancient legislation to see how deeply this great truth of immortality has gripped the minds and feelings of men. The freethinkers have been working for a century and a half to destroy the ramifications of the doctrine in modern society, and are still far from the dawn of success. The eternal life is the destiny of man, and they find the very stars in their courses fighting their ill-considered and malicious plans. "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion, wandering stars; to whom the storm of darkness is reserved forever."—Jude 13.

2. It cannot be said of all Catholics that they show equal interest and ability in resisting the invasion of the freethinkers. Dwell for a moment on that statement: my soul shall live forever. The last word sounds the destiny of the soul. Forever! Here is the metropolis of our land, the city of our pride, whose career in our fancy is to dim the glory and the age of Athens, Rome, Jerusalem, Paris, London. We shall be dead a thousand years, and it will still be young. But the soul lives forever! Here in our park is the obelisk of Cleopatra, gleaming with the suns and moons of long centuries, and destined to see as many more in the new land. We pause with emotion to recall the eyes that looked

at it long ago when Antony and young Octavius played the game of empire at Actium. The obelisk will be ashes after the longest existence, but the soul of Cleopatra lives forever. The earth, the stars, the universe, all the material beauty of God's creation, so ancient and so beautiful—its endurance will be but a drop in the ocean of time compared to the everlasting endurance of the soul; its beauty only the beauty of death compared with the divine beauty of the immortal soul. The hour which sees a soul enter heaven should set the bells of eternity ringing as if a king were born. The splendor of the soul at that moment eclipses the sun. Even its entrance into hell has the grandeur of a terrible immortality about it. What joy, courage, consolation should not this great destiny give us! What shame should pursue the wretch who sells this birthright for the trinkets of time! Alas! we are too sordid, too steeped in the mire, to feel the gracious power of immortality. So Christ must cry out in the market-place: What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world if he lose his own soul! "Thy men of peace have deceived thee, and have prevailed against thee, they have plunged thy feet in the mire, and in a slippery place, and have deserted thee."—Jer. xxxviii. 22.

III. THE NEEDS OF THE SOUL.

1. Of its own nature the soul will find eternity immediately after death, but it cannot of its own nature find the place of perfect happiness. It is a sophism of the time with the easy-going, the lazy, and the corrupt that we came into this world without our knowledge or consent, and we leave it in the same manner; therefore it is God's business to look to the hereafter, and men are released from responsibility. If this reasoning were applied to the earthly life its falsity would be evident. But men do not reason so foolishly in the pursuit of pleasure and gain. Observe the training of a learned pig, a trick dog, or a horse. Study the long preparation required from a circus boy, an engineer, or a professional man. Mark the emphasis laid by educators on the necessity of a careful preparation for the duties of citizenship. How much is demanded of men who are to hold high positions in society, art, science, and literature! Yet all these aims, and the labors to attain them, are simply of the earth and of time. Both perish with the man, they go into the grave together. It is wonderful what men will do to win the prizes of earth, what they will endure, what crimes they will commit. "There is also another grievous evil which I have seen under the sun: riches kept to the hurt of the owner."

—Eccles. v. 12. If these prizes of dust are then worth so much trouble and pain, what must not be the value of the prize of the immortal life? If they cannot be won without immense labor, suffering, self-sacrifice; if they cannot be held without extreme watchfulness against the ever-scheming robbers of society, surely much more labor must be required to win the eternal life, to hold it against those who would snatch it from us. If we must pay so heavy a price for a sure income, an honorable name, a high position, a paying occupation—prizes that are lost to us with death, it is to be expected that the price for the prize of heaven must be heavier. If the world takes its pay in our sweat and our tears, eternity will have our heart's blood. Therefore how foolish the thought of the lazy that God must look after our eternity. Time does not regard us on our entrance into the world, and we have to find our own way, make our own road, or perish. It is the same with eternity.

2. Fired with these convictions, Catholics to a man must be naturally very busy in the affairs of the eternal life. Alas, no! The majority carry out their convictions, else the Church would not live. But what a tremendous number have forgotten almost the thought of eternity and of immortality! They cherish the body, but starve the soul, of whose needs they have no

knowledge. Hot in the pursuit of gain, pleasure, comfort, the soul is left to feed itself, to prepare itself for eternity. The baptism of infancy, the confirmation of childhood, are the only forces working in these feeble personalities, while the passions are allowed full sway in the work of destruction. There is in fact no training for immortality in these unfortunates. They live on to the end like healthy animals, the body full of sin and grossness, while the soul wastes away like one in prison, and is utterly silent at the last. Then it drops into eternity with no more strength than is required to keep it on the level of hell. Its wings would not bear it to the heights of heaven. And even the comfortably good neglect the soul in a different fashion. They forget the value of the prize which they are seeking. They know that no man gets anything worth the having without paying full value for the article; yet their hope is to get heaven for the mere asking. Hence the meanness of their lives, the weakness of their charity, the absence of generosity, and the humdrum methods of devotion. The soul languishes, and must spend much time in purgatorial fires before its stains are burnt and purged away.

3. Behold where infidels get their arguments and their scorn. They do not see in such Catholics much trace of the immortal soul, and small

sign of effort to reach the heaven of eternity. In fact, they see no difference between them and downright infidels. They are met in all the places of sin, their language and their actions coincide in vileness, the world owns them, they fight and die trying to seize and hold that world which digs their grave. It is a mournful spectacle, the sight of furious men, in the mad struggle for money and pleasure, clawing and eating one another like wild beasts, forgetful of true things; but it is horrible to see the Catholic in the same abyss struggling as vilely as the worst. You may think that infidels are too busy or too indifferent to note these treasons. On the contrary, having this very question of eternity to settle for themselves, they are forever watching the follower of Christ to learn what action his faith has upon his life. A thousand times they have printed the sins and failures of individual Catholics to show of how little use is this much-vaunted faith even to its professors, many of whom are as fond of money, as devoted to sin, as much tied to the earth, and as indifferent to heaven, as the atheist. No wonder Christ raised His divine voice in the marketplace of the world: What doth it profit a man? We all know that it profits him nothing. Here side by side lie a dead Dives and the corpse of a Lazarus. What is the difference between them at this particular moment? None. The

beggar is as rich as his companion. The prince is possessed of nothing, not a penny, not a breath, nothing. And if he has lost his place in eternity, what then? The direct answer to the question of Christ is: It has profited nothing, for he has lost both his soul and his fortune.

4. Since we believe and rejoice in the belief that man is immortal, we must make that belief practical by a noble preparation for eternity. We are surrounded by the means in plenty, and the Church has organized the work of salvation in such a manner that he who runs may use them. The soul must receive more attention than the body, the business, the most honorable of pleasures. This does not mean that we are to turn hermits, or even turn our back to the world; it simply means that we shall live the daily life of a good Catholic in the avoidance of sin and the doing of good. What true dignity it confers upon the humblest man to know and feel the eternal fire that burns within his body, and lifts him, not to the level of princes, but beyond them to the likeness of the living God! "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."—Rom. vi. 5.

The Love of Our Neighbor.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.—Mark xii. 31

OUTLINE.

1. Men being children of the same Father, and possessing the same nature, they are bound to love one another.
2. This love is urged at all times, but particularly when distress rends the hearts of our brethren.
3. All are in need of charity, because all are subject to trial and sorrow; but the poor are the neediest since they dwell with trouble.
4. Our nature urges us to compassionate sorrow, and to help the distressed.
5. Our natural shrewdness also bids us exercise sympathy and charity toward the needy.
6. The safety of social order demands that the affluent engage constantly in the work of alleviating distress.
7. The marks of a spurious charity which at present displays itself before men.
8. The principle upon which true charity is founded, and by which true charity reaches all distress.
9. Time, energy, success, income, feeling, must be taxed in order to fulfil the commands of Christ in the matter of charity.

I. THE SORROWS OF MEN.

1. WHEN Christ said, the poor you have always with you, He uttered an economic truth which experience has made familiar to us. The philosophers have not yet been able to banish poverty. The poor are still numbered by the millions, and so close are all men to the precipice of poverty, that by a turn of the social ma-

chinery millions more are added to the crowd. Christ attached Himself to the poor, and made the preaching of the Gospel to the poor one of the signs of His mission. The poverty which He chose for His own life is not the poverty of distress, but the poverty of labor; the common labor which never earns more than enough to support life in decency and simple comfort, which keeps society in order and on the alert, and which finally is the health of the world. The road which the poor travel is hard, provides no luxuries, presents many temptations, and is beset with sorrow; the road of the rich is soft to the foot, beautiful to the eye, easy to the spirit; but it is not free from sorrow, and it intensifies every temptation, strengthens every passion, and passes so close to hell that Christ could not but say: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."—Luke xviii. 24. The few walk this beautiful road, the millions tread the other; and so Christ chose it that all men might see how much more beautiful it is in its simplicity than the road of wealth in its luxury. The people who walk these roads are all brethren, children of the Creator, bound for the same heaven, and having the same nature. They cannot help loving one another, since the common Father, the common nature, and the common destiny draw them to one another.

2. This natural love is strengthened by grace. Without grace the natural attraction and affection would not act with desirable uniformity, nor rise frequently to heroic heights. For love must be uniform to be of service, and it must rise often to heroism if duty is to be done. It must be displayed in all forms. As a rule, the sorrows of men draw it forth in its most beautiful and enthusiastic fashion. And how varied, how numerous, how pitiable are these sorrows! "All his days are full of sorrows and miseries, even in the night he doth not rest in mind."—Eccles. ii. 23. You have only to listen in the stillness of night, and imagination will bring to your ears the great cry of human distress which rises hourly to God. From the prisons and hospitals, from the sick-rooms, from the homes of misery and the haunts of sin, from thousands of breaking hearts whose anguish is hidden, rise moans and sighs and shrieks of agony. We are distressed by the extent and persistency of misery. Men cannot cope with it. As fast as one charity is in operation another is needed. If ever a time comes when physical sorrow can be attended to the moment of its occurrence, there will still be the immense sum of mental anguish which no human remedy can relieve, which must look to faith and to God for some alleviation: the father and mother grieving for the children gone forever; the separated friends;

the victims of moral calamities; the persecuted just; the tortured souls whose sensitiveness of nature makes living itself a pain. Who would not do his utmost to banish this distress, to solve once for all this great mystery of human sorrow? Christ sent His cheering word to all sufferers: "Come to me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you."—Matt. xi. 28.

3. Riches do not secure men against the common lot, though wealth does much to soften its bitterness. "Riches shall not profit in the day of revenge."—Prov. xi. 4. The millionaire bemoans his dead child, his lost friend, with no consolation from his millions; but he can hurry away from the scenes of his grief, and steady his nerves by various distractions. The poor have no defence against sorrow except their simplicity and their sound health, which stand them in good stead. Misfortune beats them to the ground. Sickmess and death shake the whole edifice of industry. A few months of enforced idleness and they are at the door of starvation. A change in wages and all their simple comforts are cut off at a stroke. The illness of one means the stripping of the others, for medical aid takes all the savings. The poor are helpless against wrong. An unjust employer, an oppressor can be reached only by the law, which is impossible on account of the trouble and expense. Bitter-

ness of heart springs from this helplessness and adds to sorrow. The poor are helpless against the prevailing economic conditions. The people die in India by thousands in the famine time; in Italy they go without work and bread until nature and despair of mind urge to public riot and some relief; in happy America they shift along somehow, silent through pride, until a change arrives. It can be said that the poor dwell next door to sorrow. All this simply illustrates how much pain and anguish accompanies life, and how necessary is it that we should be ever on the alert to bring prompt succor to our brethren. "I turned myself to other things, and I saw the oppressions that are done under the sun, and the tears of the innocent, and they had no comforter; and they were not able to resist their violence, being destitute of help from any."—Eccles. iv. 1.

II. SOME MOTIVES OF CHARITY.

1. It may surprise one to learn that we have little choice in the question of aiding the wretched. Although the will is free, and man can develop a surprising hardheartedness at times, yet he is so hedged in by natural sympathy, sound sense, and social necessity that he cannot withhold from suffering whatever it needs. The blessed nature given us by our

Father in heaven is beautiful because of that very tenderness, and ugly in proportion to the lack of it. There are human wolves who are ready and willing to destroy the helpless, rather than bear the burden, but they are the exceptions. When misery is in our presence we are oppressed with our inability to relieve it. The intolerable leper, clothed with the mantle of the grave and yet alive, saddened Stevenson's heart to the last degree; and he worshipped that Damien who did what so few can do: lived among the lepers, to comfort and strengthen them. The story of such disasters as that of the Johnstown flood loosens the purse-strings of the poorest. The child brought up in comfort, and ignorant that men may come to beggary, weeps terrified at the first view of wretchedness, and empties himself of his little possessions to relieve such distress. No race falls so low as not to be touched by human misfortune. No person is there but has felt once in his life the impulses of natural sympathy. The philanthropist has always been beloved of the race, because of his benevolence to the miserable, his readiness to spend time and thought and money to better their condition; and men erect statues to his memory, his name, like Abou-ben-Adhem's, leading all the rest.

2. Even if our nature were less sympathetic, another element, our natural shrewdness, would

step in to stir our charity for the suffering. The experienced know the uncertainty of human prosperity, and how the rich of to-day may be the poor of to-morrow; how the robust may come to helplessness, and proud names come down to the gutter in shame. Nearly all the wretched once knew some kind of prosperity, and never dreamed of hardships. The loving hearts of men feel the gloom which the future may hold for their children, their dearest—that future which they themselves can only provide against, and not control. It is to their own personal interest that they keep alive a spirit of charity, or of benevolence, in the present, and thereby fix a strong tradition for future generations. They do not know what unlucky turn of fortune's wheel will turn even them into the dust. The illustrations of such happenings are all about them, in that most piteous sight of the rich become poor, the incapable rich, unable to work, and preferring starvation to public charity. Therefore the philanthropist is encouraged, the state takes up the work of organized charity, and private benefactions are reduced to a system which will include every form of charity. "There are just men to whom evils happen as though they had done the works of the wicked."—Eccles. viii. 14.

3. Add patriotism to natural sympathy and foresight, and you have another strong motive

which compels even the indifferent to aid the distressed. The earnest citizen cannot but desire the peace of the nation, cannot but wish to see it always at peace with itself. Sectional bitterness, the exclusiveness of classes, are dangers to society, and nothing tends more to produce them than the distress of the workers. It was said to have been the wise ambition of Henry IV. of France that every family in his kingdom should have a chicken for the Sunday pot; no true patriot but will cherish the same desire, whose quaint form expresses pithily the common prosperity. The distressed poor suffer not only the pains of their condition, but also the very natural bitterness aroused by seeing the luxuries of the rich, as it were, sneering at their misery. "Riches make many friends; but from the poor man, even they whom he had depart."—Prov. xix. 4. It is one of the grim satires on society that men can guzzle costly wines and ride in dazzling state while children starve and walk barefoot on the icy streets. No doubt the day will come when no man will be allowed to spend a cent in luxuries while his fellow can find no work or remains without the necessities of life through no fault of his own. But it will be long before the administration of government reaches that perfection. Meanwhile the poor feed on bitterness for want of food, and the foolish among the rich

learn a certain scorn of these ragged and dirty souls, who must do without clothes and soap for reasons. The distressed reach out lean hands for the throats of the rich, and the latter suggest with Roboam that to the whips of distress be added the whips of scorpions. Such division means danger and perhaps death to the nation. Therefore the patriot the wise rich, the sympathetic, and the fearful hasten to banish bitterness by relieving distress. Then both parties learn that they are brethren, and are never so near in the most golden prosperity as in these tender moments when misfortune and necessity bring them into brotherly relationship. Elizabeth of Hungary, washing the sores of lepers, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked poor, watching with the sick and the dead, healing wounded hearts, solves the severest troubles of empire. "The rich and poor have met one another; the Lord is the maker of them both." —Prov. xxii. 2.

III. THE GREAT MOTIVE OF CHARITY.

1. But these natural motives, while worthy and beautiful, are insufficient to cope with human distress and alleviate it. Their working is uniform, but feeble in one place, and out of gear in another. The results are unsatisfactory, as we see from the charity of pre-Christian times, of the modern state, and of certain individuals

of our day. The parable of the man who fell among thieves on the road up from Jericho is a clear instance of the charity of the times before Christ. The modern state, imitating the charity of Christians, sometimes in a friendly, often in a hostile spirit, has a complete system of relief for human distress. But it has not the soul of charity, only the form; and as a consequence the shelter of the poorhouse bears the shadow of disgrace, and carries a certain horror to the heart of the needy. Even the public hospital is entered with distaste, and men fly from state institutions with haste and try to forget their stay in them. Moreover, our day has seen develop a spurious charity in the form of public benefactions, in which there is an element that smacks of the pirate distributing his surplus to the poor. Here is a millionaire who made much of his money out of the miseries of workmen; yonder is another who became richer than Cæsar by ruining a thousand humble owners of the business which he made his own; behold a third who treated his workers like slaves for twenty years before the law forced him to pay wages in money, not in due-bills. The first is building libraries, museums, and other non-essentials all over the country; the second has left an immense sum to educate the Fiji Islanders; and the third supports several missions in Africa. Babes labored and died in stifling fac-

tories, men starved in woods and mines, hearts withered into dust everywhere, that these men might pose as the benefactors of the race. This is not benevolence, but corruption. It has the odor of hell in its garments. It gives a tithe of its stealings to conceal the crime. The multitude often give these men credit for the beautiful virtue of charity or the human virtue of benevolence. "A generation that for teeth hath swords, and grindeth with their jaw-teeth to devour the needy from off the earth, and the poor from among men."—Prov. xxx. 14.

2. It requires one great motive to arouse and direct the benevolence of man into effective action. Christ gave us that motive—a supernatural force which lifts our natural kindliness into the domain above nature, and gives to our efforts a system, an effectiveness, an adequacy, and a uniformity of action that otherwise would have been beyond attainment. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" was the belief but not the practice of the highest morality and religion of ancient times. Christ made it the ordinary and ever-acting principle of His religion; and He added to it the injunction: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another even as I have loved you"; and St. Paul interpreted Him in the sentence: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." Now the meaning of this new motive is not ex-

hausted when Christian charity has supplied all needs, physical and spiritual, of the distressed. This in degree could be indeed superior to former achievement, but not more than equal in kind. The superior element of the charity of Christ is the love which it provides for the object of our charity. The relief of the destitute must be done in perfect love for them. The spurious charity described above becomes a crime in comparison with such charity, and the state aid to the suffering looks like the shadow beside the substance. State treasuries cannot buy the affections of officials as easily as their time; hence the constant investigations being made into the horrors of state charities in various parts of the land. Indifference, harshness, cruelty, sometimes crime, mark many of the state institutions; and hard and cheerless formality, with honorable exceptions, marks all.

It is not to be wondered at. The destitute, the sick and wounded, the insane, the orphans, the helpless aged, are not in themselves attractive. Misfortune and disease rob beauty and greatness even of all their charm. The hired nurse and attendant are there to give intelligent service, not their love; and without love the services of charity become automatic, and promptly degenerate into the bargaining of the market-place. The charity of Christ, carried out by His disciples everywhere, has for its

chief element love. The Christians engaged in the service of the distressed bring love along with bread and wine and medicine to the wretched. They see in the object of charity an immortal soul, a prince of eternity, whom it is an honor to serve; they see in him a child of God, who yearns for him with the tenderness of the Father; and they see in him that Christ who said: "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me."—Matt. xxv. 40. Therefore it is not surprising that the Christian Church should have brought into the world this new principle of charity, which embraces all men, all times, all conditions. And with such a principle it is not surprising that her system of charity should be the despair of governments, both hostile and friendly. Her moneys are voluntarily given for the love of Christ, not raised by the strong arm of the state; no investigation has to be made at intervals into the conduct of her institutions, into her treatment of the wretched; there is no heavy demand for salaries, as the servers of the wretched ask little more than mere support; and occasionally the number and variety of her institutions of charity aid a trembling government to steady itself and to pay off its creditors, as in the case of Italy, which confiscated in a lump the revenues of a thousand endowed charities in that country.

3. This principle of love for the object of

charity explains the success and the grandeur of the Catholic system of helping the wretched. See the teachers in the schools of the world, the missionaries in the wildest lands, the nurses of the lepers, the caretakers of the aged—what sweetness do they not bring to their hard and unattractive labors! They are the intimate friends of their charges. The horizon of their lives is the good of these unfortunates. Here is the true charity. It illustrates the words of Christ, and teaches us just what we have to do if we would carry out His commands to love our neighbors as ourselves. We must not only tax our incomes for the good work of succoring the wretched, but we must tax our time, tax our very success, tax everything of revenue that we have. For the time given we get eternity. Success is not much if it cannot spell help to others. Our friends are not much if for our sakes they cannot be induced to help. And the distressed need all that we can give them. They are ruined, and we need not fear that our charity will ruin us. It is beautiful to remember that whatever we do for the meanest of sufferers is really done for Jesus Christ the Lord. “For I was hungry and you gave me to eat: I was thirsty and you gave me to drink: I was a stranger and you took me in: naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me: I was in prison and you came to me.”—Matt. xxv. 35, 36.

The Miraculous in the Christian Life.

And it shall come to pass after this, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.—Joel ii. 28.

THE OUTLINE.

1. The miracles of Christ in behalf of the guests at Cana, the blind beggar, and the woman of Canaan.
2. The feeding of the multitude, the raising of the widow's son, and the healing of Malchus.
3. Some peculiarities of these miracles which help us in the consideration of the miraculous in the Christian life.
4. The age of miracles began with Christ, and has continued to this day, though the sceptical assert the contrary.
5. The miracle of the living Church, surviving the ages, and the miracle of the living Pope, fixed in the holy city, though the gates of hell rose up against him.
6. The saints perform wonderful miracles in every age.
7. How far does the miraculous enter into the daily life of the true Christian: with striking examples.
8. And in what way the power of God is exercised directly in behalf of His faithful children.
9. Life would not be worth the living for the fervent Catholic, if the miraculous did not have its place in his daily activities.

I. THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

1. THE artists of yesterday illustrated the life of the Saviour for us in poetic fashion. The artists of to-day, following the example of Tissot, are giving us exact tableaux of the various

scenes in that life. For example, the wedding at Cana in Galilee was once painted as the nuptials of a prince; the guests sat in a palace hall, the furnishings were of the noblest, and in the centre reclined the Christ artistically robed, ordering the African slaves to fill the vases of marble with water. The modern painter describes with his brush the wedding of poor and simple people in an obscure village of Galilee; the wine gives out to the disgrace of the wedding party, and the compassionate Mother of the Lord informs her Divine Son of the circumstance, with the conviction that He will provide against the impending shame. Again, in the case of the blind beggar who sat by the wayside wondering at the sound of the multitude hurrying by, and who began to shout like a madman for the help of the Saviour, the old painters gave us a set of characters most elegant in pose and appearance; quite forgetful that beggars are rarely a pleasant sight, that this beggar must have been rather gruesome from neglect and long journeys, and that his manners were rough and brazen enough to scorn the advice of all about him to keep still and not trouble a distinguished personage. The woman of Canaan pursued the Lord with shameless persistence, unawed by His silence, indifferent to the cold disciples, careless of the rebuke of the Saviour, and impertinent enough to reply to Him aptly.

In these three cases our Lord granted a miracle at the earnest request of His Mother, an importunate beggar, and a determined Gentile woman.

2. It was otherwise in the following instances. He fed the five thousand men who had pursued Him with admiration, without regard to hunger and thirst, into places so remote that no food could be found before actual distress attacked them. No one asked for the miracle, and not even the disciples thought of it, for they were much troubled at having little food with them and less money. Out of His own compassion Jesus fed the five thousand and left enough food to supply another contingent. It seemed to be an accident, if anything accidental occurred in His life, His meeting the funeral procession of the boy of Naim. It does not appear that any one sent for Him, or knew His dignity when He commanded the bearers to lay down the bier, and turned to speak a word of comfort to the sorrowing mother. Of His own pity He restored to her the resurrected boy. No one could have been more astonished than the wounded servant of the high priest when the captive Saviour restored to him the ear which the wrathful Peter had cut off with the sword. In these three cases the miracle was the free gift of the Lord to people who were either hostile, indifferent, or in simple admiration of Him.

3. The peculiarity of these miracles is that

they were all performed for the common people, suffering under the ordinary burdens of everyday life. The New Testament contains but a small part of the gracious deeds of this sort showered upon the unfortunates of Palestine. We can easily read behind the words of St. John on this very point, and imagine what numberless wonders were done in any and all circumstances by the Master, not only to prove His character and mission, and to impress His disciples, but to make that beautiful presence of the God-Man on earth the sweetest event to the afflicted. The words of Mary at the wedding feast show that the miraculous was not extraordinary in her dealings with her Son. They make it clear that His previous life had blessed many a sufferer in a miraculous way. It would be surprising in the highest degree if every day had not witnessed its miracle. "Behold I will bring them from the north country, and will gather them from the ends of the earth: and among them shall be the blind and the lame, the woman with child, and she that is bringing forth together, a great company of them returning hither. They shall come with weeping, and I will bring them back in mercy: and I will bring them through the torrents of waters in a right way, and they shall not stumble in it: for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born."—Jer. xxxi. 8, 9.

II. HAS THE AGE OF MIRACLES PASSED AWAY?

1. There is no reason to assert that it has, as is the fashion with the opponents of Christianity. But they mean that the age of superstition has departed, for they do not believe in miracles. They accept as mere wonder stories, given out by the credulous disciples, the miracles of Christ. The age of miracles, for the believers, began with Christ, and has continued up to the present day. The Protestant idea, at the least a step-mother to scepticism, cuts off the career of the miracle and even of the miraculous, from any participation in life, with the ascension of Christ into heaven. And sometimes there are to be found Catholics with this leaven working in them. They have never learned that the Christian life is related in every way to existing and continuous miracles, and is itself in one sense miraculous. It is the life of Christ's grace; that is, the natural uplifted, sustained, and guided by the supernatural. The Christian is in daily contact with the grace of the Redemption. What that grace was intended to accomplish in him his natural powers could never have achieved. He is a member of that remarkable body of believers in the divinity of Christ who in the midst of the fearful corruption of a decadent world have kept themselves clean and wholesome, and trained the

next generation in the love and service of God. If this is not a miracle in the exact meaning of the word, it is at least miraculous, above and beyond nature; and when the Christian life in its theory and its results is compared with the ordinary pagan life, the wonder of it is plain to any mind. "For you are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."—Gal. iii. 26.

2. Two miracles, however, stand perpetually in the eye of time, so that every man can see the marvels, let him explain them as he will. The Catholic Church, in what may be called its official shape, with its head, its bishops, its priests and people, and its executive committees the congregations, is not a light hid under a bushel. For many centuries it has stood before the world, sometimes accepted as the great mother, sometimes derided by another name, and has held its own where all other human things have sunk into dust. Great forces sought to destroy it, and were themselves destroyed. The faithful understand that this is the miracle foretold by Christ: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: but the unfaithful and the unbeliever do not try to explain to themselves the wonder of the thing. The second miracle is the presence of the Pope in Rome. It is not of doctrine that he should be there permanently. St. Peter began in Jerusalem, went on to Antioch, and finished in Rome. Not a few princes

and governments, and all the heretics, would like to see him elsewhere. The Roman emperors, the modern emperors and kings, the forces of error in all times, his own people on occasions, and his own judgment in one instance, have forced him, or coaxed him, or terrified him to leave Rome; and he has always returned. Why he should be there in the face of so much opposition, when apparently one place might be as good as another for the head of the Church, is inexplicable to the crowd. It is a public miracle of the hour. "The most high God hath wrought signs and wonders toward me. It hath seemed good to me, therefore, to publish his signs because they are great, and his wonders because they are mighty."—Dan. iii. 99.

3. In the lives of the saints any one can read how they repeated the miracles of Christ: the raising of the dead, the curing of diseases, the resurrection of souls from abysses of sin, the defiance of the laws of nature in long fasts, in walking on the waters, in walking through the air. The saints are always with us, though their lives are led in obscurity and their wonderful gifts are exercised with true discretion. These and many other things prove what the man of faith feels, that the age of miracles is simply another name for the age of Christ. "He is the deliverer and saviour, doing signs and wonders in heaven and in earth."—Dan. vi. 27.

III. THE MIRACULOUS IN DAILY LIFE.

1. The Christian lives on so high a plane that events which would once have been classed as miracles are no longer in that category. For instance, consider the return of a sinner to grace. When a soul wilfully cuts itself off by mortal sin from the current of grace, there is no earthly power which can restore to it that grace. Its position is precisely that of an inhabitant of the ark, if such a one jumped into the flood. The waste of waters held no refuge for him, and return to the ark was impossible without special help from God and special permission. The Church has the power to receive back the sinner, but it has not the power to originate in him the desire to return. That grace must come directly from God. It seems incredible. The sinner declares that he has only to step into the confessional, fulfil the conditions, and his soul is restored to life. But the wish to step into the confessional and the ability to fulfil all the conditions—where is he to get these? Not in himself, nowhere on earth, for he has forfeited all his claims on God by deliberate treason. The grace of God must pierce his nature by direct action of the Divinity before he can act or the Church can act with him. This return of the sinner we call a miracle of grace to distinguish it from the regular miracle. It is no longer a miracle in the particular sense

of the term. The same holds good with regard to the priest and the Blessed Eucharist. Here is a man born of woman, with no powers beyond the natural, except as an official of the Church. In ordination the Church confers on him the power to change the substance of the bread into the substance of the body and blood and soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, simply by uttering the words of consecration in the Mass. It is a standing miracle. It is the greatest of all the wonders performed within the Church, and it is done daily by thousands of priests all over the world. But it is not classed as a miracle in the particular sense of the term. All these actions are of the miraculous, however, and their number is legion. For example, consider the action of the Blessed Eucharist among men, from its resting-place in our tabernacles. The Scriptures tell us something of the wonders wrought by Christ among the people, but leave most of them undescribed, and are utterly silent as to the daily life of Egypt and Nazareth. What must not have been the wonders worked by Christ every day in behalf of those with whom He came in contact, in behalf of all who knew Him and loved Him and needed Him! That ceaseless activity of love has been continued through the Blessed Eucharist for centuries. The records hint at it, but they are incomplete. It is not always working

miracles, for miracles are not always needed, but it is forever working wonders.

2. This brings us to a beautiful condition in the Christian life where the miraculous, if not the miracle, has full sway. Too many Catholics ignore it, despise it in their ignorance, or neglect and misunderstand it. It is that neutral ground lying between the limits of man's natural power and the exclusive territory of the miracle. Let us call it the land of the wonderful, and try to explain it in this way. Troubles and difficulties beset a man; he exhausts human skill and ingenuity to escape from them, but fails at the last. What is left for him to do? The atheist and the fatalist submit in sullen rage to their fate. The careless or ignorant Catholic does the same, because he has satisfied himself that the age of miracles is past, and no miracle will be worked for him. The faithful soul whose reliance is always on the tenderness of God's love betakes himself to prayer. Is there need of a miracle in this event? Not at all. The power of man has been exhausted, but this is not the same as saying that now the special power of God is required in a miracle. There is still a way out of difficulties—a natural way known to no man, a present secret which genius will discover twenty years hence. What is there to hinder God's making it known in some way to the faithful petitioner? Take the case of

typhoid fever described by Father Kneipp. The man was dying with a high fever, when it occurred to the priest that the reduction of that fever might aid the patient the better to bear the strain. He had him dipped into an ice-cold bath at intervals. The fever diminished, the patient recovered, and now the cold bath is a feature in the treatment of typhoid. Take the case of patients suffering with diphtheria. Twenty years ago a majority of these patients died, while to-day the majority recover by the use of antitoxin. Twenty years ago the limit of man's skill was reached at diphtheria, but now it goes beyond. There was then in the world a remedy, a natural remedy, for this disease. What was to hinder God's making that remedy known at any time to those who asked His aid? This action would be only of the same character as the conferring of direct spiritual graces, and the result would be not a miracle, but a wonderful thing. A religious community devoted to St. Joseph found themselves one day in serious money difficulties. Collections had failed, supposed sources of revenue turned out hopeless, debts were due on the morrow, and the treasury remained empty in spite of strong efforts to get the necessary funds. Then the simple-minded superior tied up the bills in a bundle and hung them about the neck of St. Joseph's statue. Said she: "These debts were

all incurred in your name, for the poor children in our charge. We have done our utmost to pay them at the right time, and have failed. It is your turn now." The next day a lady called upon the superior to pay her a legacy left to the community by her mother. Delays had intervened, but by some happy accident she found herself that morning ready to fulfil the obligation of paying the sum at the earliest opportunity. In this case also there is no miracle. The processes are all natural. There is only the wonder of the thing. But what a rebuke to the sneering and sceptical Christian is the existence of this region of the wonderful, wherein the Lord delights to work for the happiness, the mere pleasure of His children! From its treasures have been constructed the beautiful legends of the great Catholic nations of the past—legends which show forth the strong Catholic feeling that God walks the earth in modern days as nobly as in the days when men were gods; though now His presence tarries not, fleeting glimpses of His glory only are given, but the permanent gift from His generous hands remains.

3. This middle region of the wonderful should be a lesson and a warning. The first effect of modern scepticism on the Christian is to make him accept the dictum that the age of miracles has passed away. With that acceptance it is

certain that the miracle passes out of his life. And the wonderful accompanies it. He forgets that there is a distinction between the two, and so loses his chance of either. The modern tendency is altogether in favor of the physical law, which some men so reverence that a violation of it is to them what may be called a criminal impossibility. Our life is so ruled by this law that we are mere machines to illustrate its workings. If we need rain to grow the wheat and run the mill and get the bread which keeps life in us, and the law refuses rain, no prayer to the Creator will bring that rain. This confidence in the rigidity of the law may be well founded, but the action of law is never as rigid as a materialist's expression of it. That same law is forever upsetting its worshippers by the number of its unaccountable exceptions, sardonic, frisky, as if the little god were having fun with his adorers. These exceptions may not be such, but only expressions of greater extension in the law than the adorers have yet perceived. Here, then, is the wonderland even for the materialist. But for the believer in God's beautiful providence wonderland is the halo which surrounds our hard, prosaic daily life. It is the region of the miraculous, near by the lovely land of the miracle. Without it life would be prosy and dull, the saints alone would possess its charm, and common people would have nothing to show

for their steady connection with the life of heaven. This is the lesson, and the warning reminds the sceptical of what they have lost and may lose by their submission to the harsh infidelity of the hour. They might have had fewer graves to mourn over, fewer wounds to nurse in the secret places of the heart, fewer losses, and better health, finer spirits, truer friends, than have fallen to their share. "And coming near to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice to Daniel, and said to him: Daniel, servant of the living God, hath thy God, whom thou servest always, been able, thinkest thou, to deliver thee from the lions? And Daniel answering the king, said: O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him justice hath been found in me."—Dan. vi. 20-22.

The Golden Rule of Justice.

And as you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner.—Luke vi. 31.

OUTLINE.

1. Men must work arduously to keep life in their bodies, and with all their labor no race of men becomes wealthy.
2. Very few recognize the necessity of poverty, and all strive with might and main to acquire riches.
3. In which only the minority succeed, while the majority, money-mad, failing to secure even a competence, fall into various disorders.
4. Out of these disorders, the dishonesties of the disappointed millions, rise the great dishonesties which enslave mankind.
5. The innumerable cheatings of masters and servants, parents and children, guardians and clients, landlords and tenants, merchants and buyers.
6. The dishonesties of professional men, of state officials, of political leaders, of manufacturers, and of public teachers.
7. The general character of great robberies, and what they achieve.
8. The principles on which these gigantic injustices are justified.
9. The great principle introduced by Christ, by which they are all condemned.

I. THE MONEY-MAD.

1. WITH regard to the accumulation of riches, God made the world in one fashion, and men are always busy trying to make it over after a

fashion of their own. God made the world on the principle that with steady labor and a steady saving there will be just enough to keep men active, but never enough to afford them luxurious ease. There will be no superfluities, and luxuries will be so called because of their rarity. A strange fact is that each community, no matter how great its aggregate wealth, always lives from hand to mouth. If the community stops working a season the whole body suffers severely. The nations have been laboring since time began, and have opened mines of diamonds, silver, and gold; yet what now has man to show for his labor and his treasures? "And when I turned myself to all the works which my hands had wrought, and to the labors wherein I had labored in vain, I saw in all things vanity and vexation of mind, and that nothing was lasting under the sun."—Eccles. ii. 11. If the riches of one nation had passed to another, there would be enough in the world to-day to make each man comfortable. But it seems that with the nation its accumulation dies. Ancient treasures have vanished. Each nation begins life in hardship and works slowly to a maturity of comfort. The nations of the past contribute little more than their experience, and not all of that, to the building up of the new. This is a wonderful condition of things. It shows us that we shall never have a nation of millionaires, or a nation

where men will have enough to make work unnecessary. It makes plain the fact that the multiplication of gold and silver cannot multiply the number of drones beyond a certain point; and the other fact that money cannot take the place of labor. The old law holds good at this moment that man must earn his bread in the sweat of his brow. Thus has God planned for man. In consequence the workers are the real people of the world, and they have the health, cheerfulness, and sanity of life, while the powers of society are really wielded by them. "Better is the poor man walking in his simplicity than the rich in crooked ways."—Prov. xxviii. 6.

2. Unfortunately men have never believed in the beauty of God's way, its wisdom has never been understood by them. The dream of men is to become rich, and each youth sets out to secure a fortune. The ideal is to have plenty of money, which is supposed to buy every enjoyment, and often happiness. Hence the mad pursuit of riches which has marked every race, and seems to increase in madness as the race grows older and opportunities of wealth multiply. It is not to be wondered at that the pagan should seek wealth, since his life is concerned only with this world; but who will explain the fever for gold that consumes so many Christians? Do they forget the clear declarations of Christ

on the matter of riches? "Woe to you that are rich, for you have your consolation."—Luke vi. 24. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."—Mark x. 23. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."—Luke xviii. 25. No, these sayings are not forgotten, but they are interpreted pleasantly. The interpretation means in the end that Christ did not speak literally. The Christian continues his pursuit for riches to the destruction of comfort, of the practice of religion, of his virtue, and often of his faith. The lesson of history is never learned, that the majority of men will ever remain poor. Even if it were remembered, numbers would regard life as a lottery, and work just as hard for the mere excitement of winning a prize. What man would refuse a fortune if offered to him, even with the words of Christ ringing in his ears like the last trumpet? "There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord."—Prov. xxi. 30.

3. Undoubtedly this money-madness must have a bad effect on its victims. First comes the disappointment, when old age arrives and the poor wretch is still penniless. Hope has departed, the dream is over, and the halo of life fades away, leaving respectable poverty a disgusting reality. What bitterness wells up in

such a heart! What despondency follows the madness! And often comes sin, in the shape of cheap dissipation, to drag honorable poverty into the mud! "Labor not to be rich, but set bounds to thy prudence. Lift not up thy eyes to riches which thou canst not have, because they shall make themselves wings like those of an eagle, and shall fly toward heaven."—Prov. xxiii. 4, 5. Again, while the fever is on them men work madly and scheme unscrupulously to reach their ambition. Labor becomes a curse to them, rather than the happy exercise of their faculties. Tied to their treadmill, with eyes fixed on the dollars rolling in, they have no leisure to live. The prisoner of Sing Sing leads a happy life compared to them. Their minds, consciences, souls become the slaves of their ruling passion, and they see all things from God to nothingness in its terrific light. Whether the result is wealth or poverty, the effect on them is the same. In time the money-madness differentiates its victims into slaves, drones, and thieves, with as many varieties as individuals. The slaves are not always voluntary, but they are directly or indirectly the victims of the money-making spirit. The poor wretches, who toil night and day in factories, mines, and sweat-shops, are urged on one side by their own fever and on the other by the fever of the employer, who reduces their wages, encloses them

in poisonous rooms, and cheats them into the bargain, in order to win his fortune. The drones are the philosophers, or perhaps the clowns of the circus. They are either the children of the rich, busy in spending foolishly what was acquired unjustly; or the shrewd beneficiaries of past injustice, reaping carefully now ten times more than their right allows; or the lazy, good-natured crowd, born of nature's protest against false conditions, who live on their friends, relatives, the public, or the country at large. "For when a man laboreth in wisdom and knowledge and carefulness, he leaveth what he hath gotten to an idle man: so this also is vanity, and a great evil."—Eccles. ii. 21. It is a true saying that one-half the world lives on the other half. The thieves are the professional robbers, from the common criminal who lives poorly by cheap stealing, up to the magnates who manipulate the markets and remain out of jail by buying beforehand the roads that lead to the jail. Thus the money-madness breeds a thousand injustices every hour, until the plague of flies obscures the sun and leads one to believe there is no justice in the world.

II. INDIVIDUAL DISHONESTIES.

1. We rarely feel our own dishonesties until the thieves steal directly from our purses. We rarely connect the great robberies of the modern

barons with the little every-day cheatings of the multitude. Yet a gigantic tree must have a rich soil and gigantic roots from which to draw its nourishment. Study the latest combinations for the robbery of the workers, such as the coal companies, the oil companies, and the rubber companies. Examine the conquest of India, the partition of Poland, and the stealing of China. These are the performances of Christian men and of Christian countries, and Catholics have been actors in the injustices and sharers in the gains. "I turned myself to other things, and I saw the oppressions that are done under the sun, and the tears of the innocent, and they had no comforter; and they were not able to resist their violence, being destitute of help from any."—Eccles. iv. 1. Faint protests and strong protests have been made against these wrongs, but they have not been effective, and the convicted criminals have held their positions in society, held their pews in the churches, shared much of their plunder with the poor and the press, and kept out of jail, even living in palaces of royalty or close by. Their number increases in the face of the impotent lawmaker, struggling to create a statute which will hinder their development. The great robbers buy the lawmaker, corrupt the judge, block the courts, and crush an opponent with one hand while they continue to thief with the other. What is the secret of their

power? In what soil does this devil-tree place its roots and secure such a grip? In the soil provided by the million small injustices of smaller men.

2. It is incredible what an amount of small dishonesty there is in the world. The money-madness prompts to universal dishonesty. Think of the number of persons who rarely pay anything for their living expenses, since they cheat in turn landlord, grocer, butcher, tailor, dressmaker, milliner, doctor, and the teachers of their children, with the excuse that they really have no money for these expenses. Observe the servants and workmen who cheat their employers daily in surprising ways: the clerks in offices, the conductors on trains and cars, the cashiers in banks, and the handlers of money in general, who steal small sums year after year, undetected and unpunished; the contractors who steal on their contracts, the parents who use moneys left in trust to them for their own children, the children who rob their parents, the faithless guardians of orphans and widows who steal whole estates. What an army! It is impossible to track and describe the infinite variety of these smaller cheatings. The perpetrators have excuses for their own consciences. They are not paid enough by their employers, and by stealing are only taking their own; or the victims will never miss so small a sum; or

are able to afford such losses, and deserve to lose much more, and it is no more than taking one's own; with a score of flimsy reasons to justify further stealing. "I said in my heart concerning the sons of men that God would prove them and show them to be like beasts."—Eccles. iii. 18.

3. Proceed a step higher in the scale of life, where incomes are large and life is a struggle, not for bread and butter, but for luxury and power. What a battalion of thieves surrounds the government treasury with plans to steal it bodily! Robbery is done according to forms of law, through legislative enactment; offices are bought, sold, taxed, like merchandise; blackmail of corporations is made a trade. The makers and sellers of food and drink adulterate and cheapen to the point of reducing foods and drinks to sawdust and poison. Employers steal from their workers by raising their wages and taking back the increase by forcing the same results from them on poorer material. It is a vain task following all the forms of lesser and greater dishonesties. Let it be said in brief that they reach the depths of absolute depravity, as when dealers in drugs threaten the lives of the sick by selling useless or half-useful medicines. Here, then, is the rich, fruitful, ever-deepening soil in which the great frauds thrive. We have all contributed our mite to it. What right

have we to complain when thieves of genius, of administrative power, turn our methods upon ourselves? The great public, scientific, and strictly legal frauds of the time are built on the callousness of the multitude. A railway corporation is seized by one man, who ruins its small owners, reduces wages, raises freight rates and passenger rates at pleasure; and because he keeps out of jail men praise him, forget his crimes after a while, and receive him into their houses as the great railway genius. The oil company drives out of the field all competitors by force, fraud, and persuasion, raises the price of oil to the consumer and reduces the wages of the workers, poses as a benefactor of the nations, and sees its chief robbers honored as the builders of churches and universities. If their crimes could be proven in court they would be life-prisoners of our jails. "I saw under the sun in the place of judgment wickedness, and in the place of justice iniquity. And I said in my heart: God shall judge both the just and the wicked, and then shall be the time of everything."—Eccles. iii. 16, 17.

III. THE CONDEMNATION BY CHRIST.

1. It is instructive to study the principles upon which the great robbers defend their crimes. The first is simply expressed: it is the custom. All men are doing the same thing,

and therefore little harm attaches to it. A tribe in Borneo has the custom of cutting off and preserving the heads of enemies; certain Chinese have the custom of destroying female children; in a few islands of Polynesia the custom of eating human flesh prevails: therefore the residents of these places are justified in their practices. A second principle is: I can buy and sell at the rates of necessity. A third: I can lend money at any rate of interest, if I can get it. A fourth: labor is a commodity like flour and potatoes, and I can pay for it as little as I can persuade or force the laborer to take. A fifth: if I do not ruin my rival at the first opportunity he will ruin me. A sixth: any means not leading to jail is justifiable in reaching an honest end. These lies are held as axioms both by the robbers and by their victims. Gazing at the market-place from afar, it looks like a whirlpool of hell, wherein men struggle with one another, strangling, beating, stabbing, rending, the defeated plunged into lower depths, the victorious rising to leap upon fresh enemies. Gazing upon the workers in mines and fields and factories, the sight is woeful. Yet here we have spoken only of man's injustice to man in money matters. What shall be said when we have added all the other injustices? "When just men increase, the people shall rejoice: when the wicked shall bear rule, the people shall mourn."—Prov. xxix. 2.

2. It is not a wonder that the sages of Rome and Greece and earlier empires in their decay mourned that no principle could be found to cool the money-madness in men. "Hell and destruction are never filled: so the eyes of men are never satisfied."—Prov. xxvii. 20. We are more fortunate. Christ has uttered the principle by which order has been introduced into this awful chaos: and He has given His grace to apply it and secure for it full efficiency. "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." And for His children He has added the command: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Hard-headed men of business smile at these quaint and old-fashioned sayings, which suit the school rather than the market-place or man's dealings with men. Yet these sayings are the life of society at this moment, and did they not prevail in modern life society would perish. To do unto others as you would have them do unto you is the way of peace, order, profit, and success; and the way of disorder and destruction is to have done unto you by others what you have done unto them. The money-mad reject the principle laid down by Christ, since it prevents them from getting a fortune, hinders the growth of millionaires, and prevents the corporations of piracy. Yet in the end, when society makes up its balance-sheet, and the averages must be shown, it is found that Christ is right

and men are in the wrong. "All the labor of man is for his mouth, but his soul shall not be filled."—Eccles. vi. 7. What men gain by injustice they lose by counter-injustice, or society loses in the end. The examples are many. An employer unjustly reduces wages to increase his income; his angered workmen begin to steal from him, to turn out inferior work, to give him poorer service. The corrupt politicians have bred a race of venal voters. The corrupt corporations, which cannot thrive but by the purchase of legislatures and judges, breed a race of blackmailers. All help to increase the criminal classes, private losses become immense, and taxation for the support of prisons adds to the burden. "When the wicked are multiplied, crimes shall be multiplied."—Prov. xxix. 16. The popularity of the anarchist is explained by the helplessness of society before the modern barons; that is, the two extremes of society, its two dangers, are the anarchist and the moneyking. If the principle of Christ is followed by the majority, these dangers will disappear; if it is rejected, society shares the fate of the ancients.

3. In the early history of nations there is a strong application of the principle, Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. And what order prevails in such a community governed by it! There the fatal errors which rule men's conduct just now are not known; the

money-lender is content with legal interest, and looks not for blood in the stones; buyer and seller ask only fair treatment according to the markets, and give more than is just for kindness' sake; the laborer receives honest wages, and returns honest service; men seek fortune and competence and provision for old age, but they are not money-mad, and they seek nothing at the expense of honesty. Where the spirit of Christ directs the application of the rule, and men love one another for His sake, the ideal society thrives. Fortunately for us, there are many of these societies. As they thrive the world thrives. "The meadows are open, and the green herbs have appeared, and the hay is gathered out of the mountains. Lambs are for thy clothing, and kids for the price of the field. Let the milk of the goats be enough for thy food, and for the necessities of thy house: and for maintenance for thy handmaids."—Prov. xxvii. 25-27.

The Plague of Uncleanness.

For know ye this and understand that no fornicator or unclean or covetous person, which is a serving of idols, hath inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.—Ephes. v. 5.

OUTLINE.

1. The destruction of the famous Cities of the Plain illustrates the terror of God's judgment on the unclean of heart.
2. The Creator has enlightened man, both through reason and through grace, as to laws which regulate carnal appetites.
3. And man, for reasons which shame his intelligence, has steadily refused to observe these laws, and in consequence sinks below the level of the beast.
4. The results of uncleanness are seen in a slavery of soul, and mind, and body to the carnal appetite, and in a great horror of the life to come.
5. The unclean so spread the disease that the world reeks with it to the ruin of the innocent and the disorder of society.
6. The divorce court, the impure journals, and the obscene secret press show the extent of the plague of uncleanness.
7. Therefore the greatest care should be taken by parents to guard their children from the plague.
8. A clean and well-protected youth is a guarantee of an honorable age, if the grace of God flows in upon it constantly.

I. CHRIST AGAINST THE WORLD.

1. OUR Blessed Lord had always a profound contempt for the world, and scored it often in His discourses. The contrast between His doc-

trine and its vileness is startling, but nowhere is it more so than in this matter of personal cleanness. He taught the sinfulness of a deliberate thought and desire against purity ; and the world erects temples to passion and worships the emblems of sin as gods. To grasp firmly just what God thinks of uncleanness, we have only to read the story of the Cities of the Plain as told in the Scriptures. They were prosperous, brilliant, and populous cities, in which sensual pleasures had become the common pastime of the people. Their temples were devoted to it, their private and public life was steeped in it, so that shame was a stranger in the streets of Sodom and Gomorrah. "And the Lord said: The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is multiplied, and their sin is become exceedingly grievous."—Gen. xviii. 20. Abraham pleaded in their behalf, when God announced His intention to destroy them, and he would have saved them had there been ten clean persons in their boundaries. They were wiped out in fire. Not a soul escaped from them but the relatives of Abraham. When he looked down from the mountain on the spot where the cities had flourished as in a garden, he saw only the smoking earth, ghastly and sunken, which to moderns is known as the region of the Dead Sea. "He looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and the whole land of that country ; and he saw the ashes rise up from the earth as the

smoke of a furnace."—Gen. xix. 28. The centuries have come and gone, but no beauty has returned to the vilest spot among the scenes of man's vileness. It is the fashion with some infidels to criticise this wholesale destruction of the guilty and the innocent, the babes and the adults, as unbecoming the tenderness of the God of the Christians. Apart from the fact that God does not look upon death as a misfortune to men, He can be thanked for His mercy to the innocent on this occasion. He removed them from a world wherein every circumstance—inherited taste, their history, their connections—would have urged them to repeat the shameful deeds of their fathers. The effect of a residence in Sodom was made clear in the career of the God-fearing Lot afterward.

2. Thus God regards the indulgence of sensuality. He is the Creator of the composite creature called man. He gave him his body and his soul, and He established the beautiful relationships by which all men are related to one another in the flesh. We are all descended from Adam, and the last man of time shall be related to the first almost as Cain and Abel were to Adam. Though we draw our substance from the earth, our form came from the parents who brought us forth. How deeply God respected the relationship which His wisdom and love founded can be seen in His decree that the man and woman in

marriage become one flesh. How sacred He thought that relationship can be learned from the mantle of secrecy, the profound modesty, thrown over the act of marriage. That modesty is deep rooted in human nature, in both the reason and the instinct. It takes a long course of savagery or licentiousness to destroy it, and no man can explain its essence. It is mysterious and beautiful. Mute and unfeeling nature in the act of reproduction teaches man sensitiveness and shyness. Her processes are not blatant and advertised. She seeks retirement and peace, choosing the soft gloom of night for incubation and the twilight of evening or morning for parturition. What respect should not man, the master of nature, the chief glory of earth, have for the womb that conceived and fashioned him, for the nest which nourished him! Yet he alone of all the reproductive forces drags his dignity into the mud by shameful excesses, or makes it ridiculous by his levity, or blasphemous by worshipping his animal passions. "And I sent to you all my servants the prophets, rising early, and sending and saying: Do not commit this abominable thing which I hate. But they heard not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their evil ways, and not to sacrifice to strange gods." —Jer. xlv. 4, 5.

3. The unclean are forced by their human nature to explain, defend, and encourage their filth

and their excesses. They are not afraid to face the Christ, the sages of time, the decency of nature, the experience of ages, the scorn of the clean, with their lying apology. Where they do not cover their lives with the cloak of hypocrisy, they raise a battlement of so-called religion, scientific theory, art, tradition, and custom, behind which to defend their rottenness and to propagate it. Their explanation is that nature, or God—for sometimes they affect belief in God—gave men their concupiscence for comfort's sake, to enable them to bear with calmness the hardship of living; therefore they are privileged to use the sensual appetite at pleasure. For them the laws of society, the restraints of decency, the convention of marriage are insults to nature and to God! Their defence is that passion is too strong for man to overcome or to regulate, and so the general health of the animal suffers if passion be not indulged. It is amazing how this opinion has spread among Christians. Indulgence is encouraged among the unclean by the teaching that, like any other appetite, it must be fed when it clamors for its food; that its exercise ennobles man's nature and strengthens his faculties; that life is not worth the living without its pleasures. Against such fictions Christ opposes His clear condemnations. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."—Matt. v. 8. And the unclean shall

not see Him. "You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say to you that whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart."—Matt. v. 27, 28. Who judges the world, Christ or the lechers? They cry out against Him that there is no life to come wherein He will be the judge. But they have not been able to persuade mankind at any time to adopt their views and practices. Even the decent materialist refuses to sanction their filthy excesses. "He that loveth cleanness of heart, for the grace of his lips shall have the king for his friend."—Prov. xxii. 11.

II. EFFECTS OF SENSUALITY.

1. Why do they not succeed in permanently poisoning the race? Because religion, reason, and experience are all against them. Men know that there is such a thing as a slavery of the passions, something more awful than the slavery of a man to a master. The miser is not unfamiliar to men, and he is detestable and detested heartily. The drunkard and the opium-eater are common enough to make indulgence terrible to us. The gambler, ready to stake the universe, his very soul, on a throw of the dice, to satisfy his infernal excitement, has a fascination for us. But no man seeks the slavery of drink,

opium, gold, or play for its own sake. All men dread the condition of what is so well named the "fiend." There is no slave so low as the slave of sensuality. Men can often associate with the drunkard, the miser, the gamester, for humanity is slow in disappearing from such unfortunates. No man can associate with the slave of impurity. He is a leper, unclean, the representative of a plague. No house is safe into which he enters. He respects no ties of blood, hospitality, friendship, gratitude. He sweats impurity. He is the slave of his own dreams. His unconscious looks, gestures, actions, reek with the poison. He interprets life in all its manifestations by the key of pleasure. More than any other slave he is opposed to the spiritual life, because it means the deprivation of carnal joys in this life, and the pains of hell in the next. "I have dealt with them according to their uncleanness and wickedness, and hid my face from them."—Ezech. xxxix. 24. Even where his faith remains in some way unshaken, he gives up religious exercises, keeps away from the sacraments, and refuses to pray. He fashions a hope for the future based on a Christianity of his own; nor can he persuade himself that the utterances of Christ and the Church against his pleasures are rightly explained. Of all slaves, this slave is deafest to the call of grace.

2. The sins of the parents pass on to the third

generation. Whatever there may be in the modern theory of heredity, it is undoubted that monstrous appetite in the parent increases appetite in the children. God and nature are revenged on the sensual through the children he brings forth. It is instructive to watch the carnal sinner in the training of his children. He has no desire that they shall tread the path of his youthful excesses. But he looks upon some indulgence for the boys as necessary and proper, and is content with warning and advising them. Toward his girls he becomes simply ferocious in his care, and raises them in an exclusiveness which often turns out badly. Or, on the other hand, he is indifferent through that confidence which holds foolish parents with regard to their children, and never dreams of passion in connection with them until their sins blaze before his eyes. In either case he has done the work of preparation perfectly, by the teaching and example of years in society. Has he not taught the chief principles and practices of vileness everywhere, and illustrated them in his own life? Has he not infected every spot in which he stood with the plague? Has he not encouraged every evil influence working in its behalf? Then his children will be among the very earliest victims of the plague. Their natural appetite, his own impulse to it, his doctrines, his training of the children, will incline them promptly to sin.

Tigers do not breed lambs, and the dove is very rarely the offspring of the vulture, even in the ways of grace. The unclean have poisoned the air which their children must breathe, and the chances are, unless the grace of God intervenes powerfully, that they shall live to see the children perish in the fatal air. "Their vines are of the vineyard of Sodom, and of the suburbs of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall, and their suburbs most bitter. Their wine is the gall of dragons, and the venom of asps, which is incurable."—Deut. xxxii. 32, 33.

III. THE SIGNS OF POPULAR DEGRADATION.

1. The world is ever crowded with the unclean, and no man has a right to cultivate indifference to the spread of the plague. Nothing should be taken for granted in dealing with it. Perhaps half the people of this land are without that religious training which is our only sure protection against uncleanness. One can understand, therefore, what a splendid harvest of misfortune awaits the nation at the critical turn in the lane of its history. The signs are already in the sky, lurid as the burning of distant cities. "They have sinned against him, and are none of his children in their filth: they are a wicked and perverse generation."—Deut. xxxii. 5.

What is the meaning of the divorce court in

American life? Probably its like has not been seen in the world since the decadence of Rome, for downright scorn of public decency, of marriage, of virtue. Authorities are busy with explanations of it, but there is only one explanation—dirt. The singularity of it is that its laws should have received public sanction in a decent nation having some regard for Christianity. Who secured the passage of these laws, which make divorce and remarriage probably the simplest of legal processes? Surely not the decent legislators of the time. The work must have been done by the lecherous, or their relatives, who know the needs of abnormal sensuality. Who take advantage of these laws? For the most part it must be the unclean, eager to whet their passions in new ways. The American divorce court is not the product of a decent paganism, or of even a scandalous sectarianism, which denies the sacrament of matrimony, the institution of Christ. It is the offspring of the monster of sensuality, which devours the people of this land by millions. Why the clean tolerate the divorce court is inexplicable. But it shows clearly one evil force at work in the community, and it draws to our territory much of the general filth of the world. “Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? or shall not my soul take revenge on such a nation?”—Jer. v. 29.

2. What is the meaning of the unclean press?

God has thrown around the children the cloud of innocence, in which they walk without seeing or understanding impurity. Nature, which does not wish the youth to use his natural powers before the proper time or contrary to the way of right reason, grants to the young a beautiful natural chastity. This chastity resists long the allurements of the flesh. The guardians of infancy and youth do their utmost to preserve innocence to the last moment, to strengthen natural chastity by every method known to nature and grace. Even the impure parent has no desire to hurry his child into the ways of sin. But the public press nullifies a great part of that good work. The care of God, of nature, of the parent is made vain by the stories of crime printed in detail in the daily journal, by the posters on the open street, by the books sold on the news-stands. Who controls the unclean press? Surely not the pure and upright. No; but the dabblers in tolerated uncleanness, the half-and-half Christians, the patched-up philosophers who swear by masters they do not understand, and a few high priests from the temples of Venus. "How can I be merciful to thee? Thy children have forsaken me, and swear by them that are not gods: I fed them to the full, and they committed adultery, and rioted in the harlot's house."—Jer. v. 7. They change the hearts of the young from purity to uncleanness;

they set before them examples of vileness, and add the obscene sneer and the silly laugh which show how lightly sin sits on their souls. They pave the way for the underground press, the panderer and the procurer, the agents of evil, whose name is legion, who not only enter into the swine which the journals provide, but seize upon innocence and purity by force and convert them into devils.

3. All this astounds and frightens us. But what still more astounds and terrifies is the ignorance and indifference of parents to the conditions. It seems to be forgotten by these guardians of youth that nature is at work in their children, stirring up the appetite which some day is to be honorably used for the good of society and of the individual himself; that the young must be guarded and trained to control that appetite, so as to use it properly and lawfully. Each parent seems to be convinced beforehand that no matter who falls into dissipation his particular offspring is secure against temptation and sin. Therefore the child is often ruthlessly exposed to contagion from his kind in schools where prudence and religion are known only by their absence. The daily journals are introduced into the very household, and read by the little ones. A dangerous freedom is permitted them in forming companionships. Their conduct abroad is not made the

subject of examination. It is forgotten that the agents of impurity are on every street recruiting for the houses of shame, and that their greatest success is found where parents are taking the virtue of their children for granted. As long as the boy or girl keeps up an exterior of refinement, of affection and respect, of religious observance, no danger is apprehended. Yet all this time the evil work is sapping the life of the child's soul. A catastrophe may open the eyes of the indifferent when it is too late. Or the climax may never be reached in the open. Only in after years the poor wrecks of passion, as they float miserably into the harbor of death, seeing how much their superiors might have saved them from, will accuse the father and mother bitterly of inexcusable neglect. And even where repentance and restoration have shed a clean glory over their closing days, they will not be able to hinder the thought that purity would have been the splendor of their lives had the guards of childhood and youth kept better watch at the gates against the enemy. "My days have passed away, my thoughts are dissipated, tormenting my heart. They have turned night into day, and after darkness I hope for light again. If I wait hell is my house, and I have made my bed in darkness. I have said to rottenness: Thou art my father; to worms, my mother and my sister. Where is now then

my expectation, and who considereth my patience? All that I have shall go down into the deepest pit: thinkest thou that there at least I shall have rest?"—Job xvii. 11-16.

The Taxation of Drink.

Look not upon the wine when it is yellow, when the color thereof shineth in the glass: it goeth in pleasantly. But in the end it will bite like a snake, and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk.—Prov. xxiii. 31, 32.

OUTLINE.

1. The magnitude of the temperance question in America surprises the students of our social life.
2. It is not the excesses of the confirmed drunkard which make the question so important, but the steady and wasteful spending of the moderate drinker.
3. The habit of drink has introduced a new form of slavery amongst us, the slavery of taxation.
4. The steady drinker taxes the beauty, health, and vitality of his body into ugliness and disease.
5. He taxes the powers of his mind until they fall below the commonplace, and with them fall his opportunities in life.
6. He taxes his soul until faith, honor, virtue, sense of duty are worn to the vanishing-point.
7. He taxes parent, wife, children, friends, home, and the Church and state, which he should help to support.
8. He strengthens the powerful corporations of drink, which will not let him escape from slavery.
9. And he dies only half conscious of his iniquity, ignorant that he had sold himself into slavery.

I. THE HINGE OF THE TEMPERANCE QUESTION.

1. OUR temperance question is unknown in the European world, and few Europeans can grasp the condition which flourishes here. But

one has only to look at the annual drink-bill of the American people to feel that cancerous growths are already developing in the body politic. It is pleasant to know that an industrious people have money to invest in recreation and in the simple luxuries of the poor. When one item, however, of the spendings for amusement runs into the hundreds of millions, and when these millions stand in great part not for the superfluities of the workers, but for their actual necessities, then sadness takes the place of joy. If we go on to say that the spending of these immense sums reduces the comforts of the poor, deprives thousands of many necessities, and sends the children through life limping, we have at once raised a grave question; and if we add that this waste increases the number of the sick, develops paupers, turns honest men into criminals, and thereby increases the expenses of the state, we have pointed out a condition which warrants the ringing of alarm-bells and the call of our citizens to arms as if the plague had struck us in every quarter, or a foreign enemy had landed on our shores. The annual drink-bill of our people is \$500,000,000. Not another word need be said. Behold the most eloquent temperance sermon ever preached!

2. To understand that sermon in the very depths of the mind and the heart, it is not necessary to be an upholder or an advocate of total

abstinence; nor need the preacher and persuader recommend the taking of the pledge to all mankind; nor is it expedient to describe the drunkard and his progress to delirium tremens. The victim of hard drinking is only a highly colored illustration of the drink-habit. He convinces us only that we should never make hogs of ourselves. The firm grip of alcohol on him warns us against too free use of any drug. But the sight of him rarely goes beyond this dictum of common sense in its effects. For he does not adequately represent the real evil arising from heavy drinking. The so-called moderate drinker is the better illustration of the sad condition into which we have fallen—the respectable, hard-working, every-day citizen, whose steady drinking supports the distillers and brewers and their cunning distributors, the saloon-keepers, whose vote enables the liquor interest to practise all the tyrannies of irresponsible power, whose influence paralyzes the fighters of the liquor tyranny, and whose bad taste in drink hides from him the poisonous character and inferior quality of the liquids he consumes. The drunkards are few, but the steady drinkers are counted by tens of millions. They are of all grades of society, and their life-histories are full of instruction. They are drinkers to the remotest generation; multiplied troubles pursue them in which drink consoles them; respectability is

their hall-mark, and they keep their heads over the surface to the last; but disease, death, hardship, struggle make their lives a continuous walking along the precipice; and when they fall, "they fall like Lucifer, never to rise again." "He that loveth good cheer shall be in want: he that loveth wine and fat things shall not be rich." —Prov. xxi. 17.

3. At once there is a protest from the regular drinkers against associating them with intemperance. Let them be patient and hear this discourse to the end. They are the guilty parties, not the drunkards, upon whose shoulders the entire infamy of the drink evil securely rests. Their habit of drinking has introduced a new form of slavery amongst us. The American mind has a horror of slavery of the African kind. It is not so ready to understand and detest the slavery of sin; nor is it any too quick to realize and begin the inevitable fight against the industrial slavery of our time. There are many forms of slavery, and the most terrible and hateful and destructive is that which is not suspected. The African slave is owned by a master, and his legal status is that of a chattel of a peculiar kind. Peculiar legislation in civilized countries secured for him the comforts and privileges of a human being, and natural feeling did much more in direct dealings of master and slave. Nevertheless he was a slave, who came and went at the bid-

ding of one man, who could be sold like a horse, and subjected to indignities. The industrial slaves of Europe are freemen, many of whom own the privilege of voting. But of what value is that freedom which one cannot use? The slave is tied to one condition by law; a freeman tied to one condition by various dishonorable circumstances is no more than a slave, though the law recognizes him as free; and such is the lot of thousands of freemen in Europe. So taxed are they by government, landlord, and poverty that they cannot stir from the locality in which they were born. Taxation can be made a form of slavery. The contention of this sermon is that the drink-habit has introduced a form of slavery by taxation. The drink-dealers are the owners of millions of slaves under the forms of freedom. Here is the hinge of the temperance question. In place of the traditional drunkard, whose career used to illustrate the evils of drink, behold the American slave. "I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking on the ground as servants."—Eccles. x. 7.

II. THE TAXATION OF BODY, MIND, AND SOUL.

1. No nation owns a finer boy than the young American at the age of twenty. Inclined to leanness, pale of countenance, active and graceful in manner, a good dresser, polite, full of

energy, he is the type of youthful beauty and natural refinement. He may be of any race, the general appearance and character are much the same. His clear eye, fine skin, sweet and manly voice are worth more than ordinary appreciation. His home training as a rule has not been spoiled by the accidents of time. The whole world pauses to take a second lingering look at him. At the age of twenty, after the American fashion, he may be said to be on the threshold of the saloon. To that portal more than half the American boys must go at their majority. The current of youth sets that way, the door is always open, the lights and music are brilliant, and the city officials smooth the way by open encouragement or by driving off the opponents of the saloon into a persecuted obscurity. "Be not in the feasts of great drinkers, nor in their revellings, who contribute flesh to eat: because they that give themselves to drinking, and that club together, shall be consumed; and drowsiness shall be clothed with rags."—Prov. xxiii. 20, 21. Ten years of drinking works a transformation in the American boy. His color is now high, his thin face slightly bloated, his lips thickened, his eyes muddy, his complexion coarse, his body fat, his breath bad, the odor from his body pronounced, his voice raspy, his grace and activity much diminished. What has happened? Heavy taxation of his physical or-

gans. One may surely call it heavy, since he has lost by it all the beauty of youth, and some of its vigor. He has put such a load on his stomach, liver, kidneys, and heart for ten years that they struggle, like the European slaves, merely to live. Trifles such as appearance, color, complexion, have no longer place in his struggle for life. But the man has not lost his respectability, his character, or his position. He is still the same honest and jolly fellow of ten years previous. "A man to whom God hath given riches, and substance, and honor, and his soul wanteth nothing of all that he desireth."—Eccles. vi. 2.

2. We cannot be sure of that. He had a fine mind when he left school or college. He had perfect control of himself, and his natural appetites were in their proper place. He was full of ambition, alert for opportunities, able to see them when they rose in his way, energetic in seizing them. Men will tell you that he is the same at this moment; a doctor will tell you that he cannot be the same, if he has been tippling steadily for ten years. The edge of his talent and cleverness has been worn off. He has reduced his energies more or less, and a shade of indolence, the laziness of the saloon and of alcohol, has fallen on him. The mind is more sluggish in its movement. He imagines it quicker because his experience enables him to do now

what he could not ten years ago; but though his experience has increased, the mind is not as alert, as quick, as successful in using that experience as it would have been were it not steeped in alcohol. He misses opportunities, and every year he misses more. He has lost the calmness of the dispassionate youth. He has no longer control of his passions and appetites, for drink lets loose the little devil lurking in them. He is less pure, coarser, brutality shows in his temper, the fine balance of his clean youth has not been strengthened, but weakened and perhaps destroyed. Some unfortunates after a ten-years' course of tippling find all the passions let loose like a tempest, which rages through their whole lives afterward. Many simply dip into the pleasures suggested by heated imaginations. In either case the mind is disturbed, tossed about, and its natural acumen has vanished. In other words, to reduce what has been said to a single sentence, the young man has taxed his mind as he taxed his body. He has paid to his master, the tax-gatherer, not only the interest, but a goodly part of his fair capital.

3. If that were only all! Poor lad, he has also laid a heavy tax on his soul. He might not have been the best of boys at twenty, so precocious are the young of these times. But the wickedness of youth lacks malice and habit, and the unconquerable innocence of the boy—unconquer-

able up to a certain age—keeps all indication of sin from his face, showing how lightly it has touched the soul. Fresh from home and school, he has a high standard of living and of association. His mother and his sisters are dear to him, his speech has always been clean, and his thoughts have not been uttered in the spirit of uncleanness. What a change in ten years! His thoughts, language, actions, companions, reek of the saloon. He has fallen, unconsciously perhaps, to its level. It may be the saloon of a private club or otherwise. He has fallen to its level. He had a beautiful faith ten years ago—the faith of the young, which knows no temptation, and reaches easily and lovingly to the throne of God. He has the faith still, but the practice of it does not trouble him. The drink-habit, which unchained the tempest of his passions, has shaken the faith in him. If his mother could but see the history of his soul in those ten years, and he could read the misery of his condition in her sorrow, what a revelation it would be to him! It is the history of a struggle with degradation, up and down from dirt to grace, discouragement followed by excess, disgust succeeded by despair. He has taxed the powers of his soul, and the grace of Christ, to satisfy his appetite. What a pitiful all-round change in ten years: the beautiful boy fresh from his mother's arms, and glorious in spiritual

cleanness, converted into a drink-steeped sinner! "Thy eyes shall behold strange women, and thy heart shall utter perverse things. And thou shalt be as one sleeping in the midst of the sea, and as a pilot fast asleep when the stern is lost. And thou shalt say: They have beaten me, but I was not sensible to pain: they drew me and I felt not: when shall I awake and find wine again?"—Prov. xxiii. 33-35.

III. THE SLAVE-DRIVERS.

1. Taxation once begun is difficult to shake off. We have seen what ten years of it did for the youth. The process continues throughout life, as we see from the annual drink-bill of the people; and the taxation increases out of proportion to the numbers, proving that the drinkers begin earlier, and drink more as time goes on. If the moderate could confine the taxation to themselves, the matter would be still hard enough; but they extend its withering influence over all dear to them. The average man earns no more than is needed to support his family decently. Wages and salary are rarely enough to provide anything for old age. Only with careful management will a father keep his home and train up his children usefully. Yet in marriage he never gives up the drinking habit of his youth, and the mystery is, where he gets the

money for the luxury. By taxing his wife, his children, his home, his friends, and his neighbors. It would be tedious to follow him in the diabolical process of stripping his own flesh and blood of the necessities of life. His spending forces the wife to a miserable economy, a state of semi-starvation, which deprives her of all comfort in life. The struggle between want and honesty is too heavy. He taxes the clothes off her back, taxes her into hard labors and deep sadness, taxes her health and happiness. He taxes the children by depriving them of a hundred joys of childhood, by dressing them poorly, by feeding them lightly, by shortening their school-days, and by hurrying them to work; and then he taxes their wages, which he usually seizes, until they revolt against taxation and him. The bills are only partially paid, which is a taxation of his neighbors; he borrows from his friends; and too often the hospital has to take care of him and the home has to receive his children, for he has no savings to supply the needs of sickness. No millionaire could stand the taxation which this man has put upon himself and his own for a lifetime. No government could endure a decade that taxed its people so fearfully. "Who hath woe? whose father hath woe? who hath contentions? who falls into pits? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? Surely they that pass their time

in wine, and study to drink off their cups."—Prov. xxiii. 29, 30.

2. But we have not yet reached the end of this wretchedness. This is the wretch who has fastened upon us the yoke of the saloon. He is a respectable voter, even religious if you will, and he believes in free access to the saloon. He has no use for total abstinence, temperance leagues, high license, or no license. There is no harm in drink, as his life proves. He has drunk deep since he was twenty, and he is living hearty and respectable to testify to its helpfulness. His children drink, and a finer family never drew breath. He will support the saloon, a public nuisance and a public danger as at present managed, the resort of the harlot, the breeding-place of fornicators, the home of foul language, the roost of unclean birds. Behind this saloon stand the liquor interest, the distillers and brewers, who take rank in power and iniquity with the worst of the robber barons of history. They provide the brains and the money by which their business shall be extended. It is never to go down, but must increase from year to year until everything that can drink whiskey and beer is enabled to drink its fill from the earliest period of drinking to the last swallow of time; till the very animals of the hearth, even the sponges of the bathroom, shall be soaked to the limit with the poisons.

The drink barons are working to that end. They are riveted on us, not merely by legislatures, or by the habits of the people, but chiefly by this devotee of drink. He will not permit their traffic to be restrained; hardly will he permit it to be examined and directed in his own interest, at least to secure pure liquors. "How happeneth it, O Israel, that thou art in thy enemies' land? Thou art grown old in a strange country, thou art defiled with the dead: thou art counted with them that go down to hell. Thou hast forsaken the fountain of wisdom: for if thou hadst walked in the way of God thou hadst surely dwelt in peace forever."—Bar. iii. 10-13.

3. Taxation has enslaved him and his to the lowest point of slavery—the depth in which the slave finds contentment in his serfdom; and he labors to bring all mankind into the same state. And through the long years which measure this easy descent into hell, no one is more persuaded than he of his own honorable and merry career. He tells himself that life has been for him of the jolliest kind. He has kept himself respectable; he has kept his faith, and attends church in his old age. It is an early old age, but that is to be expected from the jolliest kind of living. His memories include a few periods of regrettable dissipation, but he has repented him of his sins. After all, he is going to die honorably; he is not a drunkard, and his

life proves the temperance agitators to be mere dreamers of bad dreams. He is satisfied. Poor victim! When the Judge places before him the account of his life—its lost time, neglected opportunities, forgotten duties, enslaved wife and children, wasted graces—what surprise will keep him dumb! What a contrast will he make with the drunkard! This unfortunate played chief part in a fearful tragedy, and men gazed horror-stricken at its last scene. But the other played the part of a fool in a drama, whose chief element was delusion. “But these also have been ignorant through wine, and through drunkenness have erred: the priest and the prophet have been ignorant through drunkenness, they are swallowed up with wine, they have gone astray in drunkenness, they have not known him that seeth, they have been ignorant of judgment.”—Isa. xxviii. 7.

The Last Hours of Christ.

There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness : and we have seen him, and there was no sightliness, that we should be desirous of him : despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity ; and his look was as it were hidden and despised, whereupon we esteemed him not.—Isa. liii. 2, 3.

OUTLINE.

1. The end comes to all things human, and every man must taste the bitterness of death ; therefore the human career of Christ ended in sorrow.
2. This natural sorrow was increased by the treason of Judas, who sat with the Master in the supper-room.
3. The farewell of Christ to His disciples, and the world, is marked by that human pathos and deep sadness peculiar to the last moments of man.
4. Jesus begins to die in the Garden of Gethsemane, where His human nature faints in the excess of its anguish.
5. The vision of the treason which condemns Him to death in His youth, after His wonderful life among His own people, overwhelms Him.
6. The continuance of that treason among succeeding generations, in the loss of salvation for millions of His beloved children, brings on the bloody sweat.
7. His claim to the kingship of Judea is met by the princes of the people with His enthronement on the hill of Calvary and the crowning with thorns.
8. His court is made up of the mob, the soldiers of Rome, some members of the royal family, and sinners of note, who present their felicitations.
9. And the Mother of the new King enjoys the privilege of seeing Him die in torment, and of receiving His body into her arms.

I. THE LAST SUPPER.

1. "WHO is the man that shall live and not see death?"—Ps. lxxxviii. 49. "We all die, and like waters that return no more, we fall down into the earth."—2 Kings xiv. 14. The end comes to all things human, and that end includes the bitterness of death. We pass out of life with the taste of the grave in our mouth. No man can escape that bitterness, which seasons every pleasure of life. Christ made no exception to the law of sin in His own favor, although He was the Sinless One. He came to bear our infirmities, of which the saddest is death. When He sat down with His disciples to the Last Supper, His were the feelings of the man close to death, of the innocent condemned who sweats with thought of the gallows. We men give our Lord no credit for His natural anguish, because He was God, and could relieve Himself of it if He pleased. Neither do we give the warrior credit for his dread on the day of battle. It is his business to fight, and his calmness, his smiling exterior, are to us true expressions of his feelings; whereas he writhes with secret pain at the dread possibilities of the day. It is the penalty of our nature that we tremble, and Christ trembled—for was He not the sweet human Son of Mary? For the last time He sits down in peace with His chosen friends. When

He rises it will be to go forth, not into the sweet country blessed by His feet, to the home of Bethany, to the companionship of Mother and friend, to bring joy to the suffering, to be adored by the people, but to shame, suffering, and death. What does a poor sufferer think of in such a moment? Of the days that are gone, happy youth—scenes that gain beauty by the contrast with death's darkness. And Christ thought of humble Nazareth, and of the poor people, and of Joseph working without and of Mary busy in the house; of the sunshine in the hot streets, of the long cool nights and their restfulness, of His youth and His manhood—in fine, of thirty-three years of loveliness such as belongs only to the dreams of the divine. And it was all, all ended forever. How such an ending pierces the heart, when the last darkness begins to gather! "Give glory to the Lord your God before it be dark, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; you shall look for the light, and he will turn it into the shadow of death, and into darkness."—Jer. xiii. 16.

2. The depth of man's love for his own adds to the bitterness of dying. The Lord looked on the faces of His disciples, from John, the tender, innocent, loving youth, to Peter, rugged, stubborn as the rock, faithful, and weak. "Having loved his own who were in the world.

he loved them unto the end.”—John xiii. 1. We know what the love of the father is for his children; what must not have been the love of Christ for His faithful friends? He saw beforehand their desolation over His loss, their long years of struggle and sorrow and persecution, their glorious but none the less painful dying, —all to be endured without the comfort of His visible presence; and although He saw, too, their final triumph and happiness, like the human father leaving his little ones, His divine heart bled for them. No matter how the strength of God uplifts the heart of the servant in pain and death, the suffering is real and desolating. And these children were to suffer for His love, and for the sake of the souls whom He loved. Like children they sat around Him now, dreaming only of present comfort and future glory, speaking bravely of the misfortunes that seemed so distant, yet stood gibbering at the very door. What courage to know so much, to suffer so, and still to smile, to be calm, to advise, to conceal anguish that might frighten these timid children! But He could not conceal His pain at the sight of Judas. “When Jesus had said these things he was troubled in spirit; and he testified, and said: Amen, amen, I say to you, one of you shall betray me.”—John xiii. 21. Poor wretch! What harder word need be said of him than that he broke for a moment the

courage of the Christ! Yet He would not betray Judas to his brethren, only secretly naming him to John. He bore the traitor's presence while He could; and when anguish reached its limit, He spoke to him: "That which thou dost, do quickly."—John xiii. 27. "He therefore having received the morsel, went out immediately. And it was night."—Ibid. 30. The lost child was gone forever. One can imagine with what eyes Jesus pierced the unfortunate as he passed out into the eternal night: thus has many a heartbroken father looked after the beloved son bent upon destruction.

3. The moments pass until that instant when the farewell must be spoken. How terrible to the hearts of men is that word Farewell, uttered for the last time! At the bedside of the dying it is impossible to decide which face expresses the greater anguish—his whom death has stricken, hers who is now about to lose the very light of life. The sweet past, the blessed present, surge into the heart, the heart rises to the lips, but the lips dare not pronounce the word. Every feature of love's countenance speaks wordless pain, utterances are wild and broken. There is no painting the face of a lonely mother, dying, surrounded by little children, who cannot understand that she is leaving them forever—she who could not bear to desert them for a moment. Thus stands Jesus

before His helpless disciples. He speaks of His coming woe, and they do not understand Him. He performs for them the little offices of love. He washes their feet. He assures them over and over that His going away will bring them no harm; that in a little while they shall see Him again; that He goes before only to prepare a place for them in heaven; that they must love one another and serve one another, even as He had served them; He gives them His peace, bids them ask the Father for all things in His name, and prays for them in such words as come only from a heart bursting with love; and He calls them endearing names: My little children, Mine own. The human heart of the Lord speaks so loud in this farewell that its tumultuous beating can be felt in the inspired page. And the last word being said, Jesus arises with the abruptness of grief, saying: Arise, let us go hence.

II. THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

1. Few souls are so strong that they can walk to their doom alone. Jesus takes with Him the disciples, and leads apart three of them, Peter and James and John, to witness His suffering and to comfort Him. Like children they fall asleep, and leave Him alone. The soft night of Judea enwraps Him, but the night of death presses on His soul. The vision of death is be-

fore Him—instant death under the harshest circumstances. We shall know what that vision means when it comes to us with the physician's declaration that life is leaving us. The mere act of dissolution is nothing compared with the anguish of dying. In ordinary pain, in times of passing trouble, we find intervals of distraction and of relief. The coming of a friend, a pleasant sleep, a holiday by the sea, a successful enterprise act as anodynes, and hope lights up the darkest moment. But from all distractions the dying come back to the bed of death. Hope is dead. The momentary forgetfulness yields to the ever-rising grief. The criminal laughs at a passing pleasantry, but the very laugh reminds him of the scaffold, and the laugh dies into a moan. O death, be speedy! is the cry of the dying. The vision of death is so bitter to the soul. Christ looked at it long on this night. Its details were lurid: the palaces of Caiphas, Pilate, Herod; the scourging, the crown of thorns, the walk to Calvary burdened by the cross, the long agony between earth and sky. He denied Himself the single consolation of His Mother's presence. He stood alone before the dread vision, with the sounds of approaching enemies, who were to make the vision a reality, distinct in the silence.

2. Constantly we have to repeat to ourselves that Christ was a man, and suffered His agony

precisely as men suffer theirs. We have only to look into our own hearts to understand in part His suffering. When dying becomes part of a man's daily life, while he is still able to move about with a clear head, his sufferings are manifold. The worn and helpless invalid has little strength for thought. Christ standing alone in the garden was in perfect health and vigor. The vision of death came to him as to the soldier who leads a forlorn hope in the morning. With it came the vision of treason which was to end His life early and miserably. According to man He was a failure, since He came to His own people, and they were to reject Him, torture Him, and put Him to death. Death had come to Him in His youth, through the people whom He loved, for whom He had performed such wonders in pure love, and that death would fill them with delight. What anguish in the thought! But the results of that rejection of Him filled Him with deeper sorrow. "For thus saith the Lord concerning the sons and daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bore them; and concerning their fathers, of whom they were born in this land: They shall die by the death of grievous illnesses; they shall not be lamented, and they shall not be buried, they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth; and they shall be consumed with the sword, and with famine; and

their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of the air, and for the beasts of the earth."—Jer. xvi. 3, 4. This was to be the fate of Jerusalem, famous slayer of the prophets, and now to take rank as a Deicide. He had wept over the beautiful and beloved city, which would not be saved. So Jeremias had wept over it, and John the Baptist in his prison. The vision of treason weighed down the soul of Christ.

3. If His life was a failure as far as the Jews were concerned, it was also to be useless for thousands of souls in the years to come. "This child has been set for the fall and resurrection of many in Israel," said holy Simeon as he held the infant Jesus in his arms. We see the truth of the prophecy in the life around us. How sad, how depressing, how mysterious is the headlong rush of human beings into ruin! The wretches fished out of the rivers, the suicides gathered in from the haunts of shame, the dead sinners everywhere perishing in perfect indifference or despair, the hordes of criminals in prison and out of it who will sin to the last: who is not touched by the sight and the thought of them, remembering that they are the beloved children of loving households, which never forecast this end for their treasures? And if our cold hearts are touched, and our slow tears fall, what must not have been the sorrow of this lonely lover of His race, standing in the Garden,

and reviewing with the divine vision the long procession of His lost children! No wonder that He fell in a bloody sweat, and cried out for the chalice to pass from Him. "Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins."—Isa. liii. 4, 5.

III. CALVARY.

1. Pilate ordered His cause to be inscribed over His cross: Jesus Christ, King of the Jews. He had claimed to be the Messiah, the great king of the Jewish nation, foretold for centuries. Therefore His people in mockery prepared for Him kingdom, throne, and court, and gave Him possession of them some hours before His dying. In the court of the Roman, then ruler of the world, maker of kings and nations, He was crowned with a crown of thorns, clothed with a purple robe, and honored with a sceptre of reed, amid the laughter, blows, and insults of the bystanders. Pilate presented Him to His people, as it were, in the name of his government; and His people promptly ordered Him to crucifixion. The procession of enthronement was formed, and set out from the city to the hill of Calvary, the new kingdom conferred upon the King. He

carried His throne upon His own shoulders, the rabble followed Him, and on the summit of the hill the ceremony of enthronement took place. He was nailed to the throne naked, and lifted into the air under the burning sun of Palestine. Was there ever before such a King and such a coming into His kingdom? "And I was as a meek lamb that is carried to be a victim: and I knew not that they had devised counsels against me, saying: Let us put wood on his bread, and cut him off from the land of the living, and let his name be remembered no more." —Jer. xi. 19.

2. The court which attended this King was as strange as the kingdom. The majesty of Rome was represented by the centurion and his soldiers, and its future faith by the conversion of this officer to the faith of Christ, when he saw what wonders were enacted on Calvary. The lightness of man had its illustration in the soldiers throwing the dice for the garments of the King; and his despair and hardness of heart in the miserable death of the impenitent thief. Man's hope found its expression in the simplicity and fervor of the good thief, his penitence in the weeping Magdalen, his innocence and fidelity in the youthful John. Near by were the faithful women, whose tears and lamentations had touched the heart of the King on the royal journey. And all about was the rabble which

Christ called the world: the idle and curious come out to see men die in torture; the busy officials and the busier peddlers who had work to do and money to earn; the frightened friends of Christ who did not dare to make themselves known; and the leaders of the conspiracy which had given this King so wonderfully to doom. They felicitated Him on His success in reaching the throne of His ambition, reminding Him that He had promised to rebuild the temple in three days, that He had saved many from death, and that He was the Son of God. Then they asked Him to prove His ability and His claims by saving Himself, or getting the help of His Father, or by exerting only a tithe of that power required to rebuild the temple in three days. As they passed the throne whereon He hung in silence, heads were wagged, tongues thrust out at Him, grimaces made. He alone held His peace, while the world displayed both its ignorance and its ingratitude. Nature, which holds to its routine amid the tragedies of mankind, frightened away the baser courtiers, who fled to their homes when sun and moon withdrew their light and the earth heaved in distress. Only the faithful friends of the King and the soldiers on duty faced the gloom and the terrors of the day.

3. Christ died on the cross, rejected of men, but His bitterest human torment was that He

died in the heart of His Mother. Strong souls are able to bear their own sufferings with equanimity, but faint with despair before the anguish of their dearest. Jesus could endure His day of agony without one word of complaint, without a single demand for pity; and He could so far forget His own misery as to comfort the weeping women, turn the heart of Peter to his weakness, and even make a bid for the salvation of Pilate. But that His revered and beloved Mother should see Him die so terrible a death must have been the summit of His anguish. "There stood by the cross of Jesus his mother." In her presence He endured His death agony, and helpless to relieve she heard His last moan. "Weeping she hath wept in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks."—Lam. i. 2. The friends who took Him down from the cross could not but feel that His life was a failure. They had seen some of His miracles, and had enjoyed some of His sweetness. She had seen all, and enjoyed all; and of all that beauty and wonder there remained now only the prophecy of Simeon, "And thy own soul a sword shall pierce," and the dead body of her Son. This was His gift to her on the day of His coronation: a death of shame. "O all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow."—Lam. i. 12. What a spectacle for the Mother was this body lying in her arms!

“From the sole of the foot to the top of the head there is no soundness therein: wounds and bruises and swelling sores: they are not bound up, nor dressed, nor fomented with oil.”—Isa. i. 6. No writer has described for us the mutual anguish of the Son and the Mother. We know only from experience what unutterable woe stifled her throbbing heart as she walked in the procession to the tomb, saw the body laid away, and heard the grinding of the great stone as it closed up the tomb.

The Risen Christ.

Jesus came, and stood in the midst, and said to them : Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad, when they saw the Lord.—John xx. 19, 20.

OUTLINE.

1. The scene on the morning of Christ's resurrection, when He re-entered the world as the victor over death.
2. The exquisite human nature of the God-Man, in its blessed condition of immortality and impassibility, revives the reign of the innocent Adam on earth.
3. The beauty, peace, and tranquillity of the human soul of Christ bring to the earth again the order and harmony of the garden of Paradise.
4. Standing on the hill of Calvary, the risen Lord looks at the palaces of scheming Caiphas and corrupt Herod, and into those wicked hearts.
5. He sees the palace of unfortunate Pilate, who preferred Cæsar to Christ, only to lose both ; and the hovel which sheltered Barabbas, whom the Jews preferred to Christ.
6. And in another quarter He looks upon the dead body of Judas swinging in the halter, and upon the bowed form of Peter weeping over his own infidelity.
7. The wonders of this great scene are repeated in the present time, when the Christ of the Eucharist looks out upon the modern Jerusalem.
8. He finds the characters of the resurrection morning multiplied throughout the sleepy, indifferent world.
9. Thus also will He find them on the morning of the great resurrection, when He looks from His throne of judgment upon the human race.

I. THE MORNING OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. HOLY indignation is the feeling against the evangelists that their account of the resurrec-

tion of Christ should be so meagre. Yet this very meagreness allows us play for the imagination in picturing to ourselves all that happened, from that august moment when life ran red again in the veins of Christ up to the solemn hour of His ascension. It is not so much the miracle of the dead body raised to life, for this wonder had been seen many times by His disciples; nor yet the glory of the great resurrection which this miracle foretold for man; but rather the justice of this return to life of the innocent condemned, that attracts, charms, entrances us. The beauty of justice was never so brilliantly set forth as when this divine Victim of the greatest injustice within the capacity of man's malice walked out of His tomb and stood on the scene of His supposed destruction. Only the angels saw Him, as He rose from death with the simplicity of God, to whom death, and life, and miracle are but sparks from the fire. He stood in the world once more, in the soft dawn; and the brutish world slept, while nature hushed itself in awe of this wonder of life and beauty that stood upon its bosom. Thought fails, words die in the mind, the imagination is paralyzed before it. We murmur only the words of the inspired: "He shone in his days as the morning star in the midst of a cloud, and as the moon at the full. And as the sun when it shineth, so did he shine in the temple of God. And

as the rainbow giving light in the bright clouds, and as the flower of roses in the days of the spring, and as the lilies that are on the brink of the water, and as the sweet smelling frankincense in the time of summer. As a bright fire, and frankincense burning in the fire. As a massy vessel of gold, adorned with every precious stone. As an olive tree budding forth, and a cypress tree rearing itself on high, when he put on the robe of glory, and was clothed with the perfection of power."—Ecclus. 1. 6-11.

2. Since creation the poor earth had not witnessed such a spectacle as this Man walking up from the Garden to the summit of Calvary. When Adam came from the hand of God he was brother to this Christ in innocence; but from his fall till now earth had not felt the tread of the sinless foot, immortal and divine. The body of Christ born of Mary was a human body, capable of suffering, of change, of receiving injury, and had passed through the ordeal of a terrible death; but the body of the risen Christ was a more exquisite thing, no longer of earth, endowed with celestial power and beauty. Its odor was of heaven, its grace of eternity. It was as a rich garment interwoven with gold, needing only the light of heaven to blaze with majesty. No wound, no insult, was ever to reach it again. It remained visible and palpable, yet air and light were no longer the nec-

essary means of seeing it. Caiphas might have looked in the space which Christ occupied and have seen nothing. Pride and other sin could not reach with a telescope the beauty of the risen Christ, who yet was visible to the lowest of His disciples. This beautiful body was independent of all conditions of space and time. And still it was the body of Mary's Son, human, palpitating, luminous with life, and love, and joy: "One like to the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. And his head and his hairs were white, as white-wool and as snow, and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass, as in a burning furnace. And his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars. And from his mouth came out a sharp two-edged sword: and his face was as the sun shineth in his power. And when I had seen him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me saying: Fear not. I am the first and the last, and alive and was dead, and behold I am living for ever and ever, and have the keys of death and hell."—Apoc. i. 13-18.

3. How much sadness, misery, despair, depression, turbulence have torn the hearts of men since the expulsion of Adam and Eve from their garden of peace and order! The Son of God and His sinless Mother did not escape a share

in the common distress. At that moment the poor Mother lay sleepless under the terrible spell of her Son's last hours of agony. The fathers tell us that the vision of Him at the instant of His rising brought relief to her suffering, and an ecstasy which closed the seared eyes in heavenly sleep. "Blessed are they that saw thee, and were honored with thy friendship."—Ecclus. xlviii. 11. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."—Apoc. xx. 6. The soul of Jesus was now clothed with immortal calmness. Perfect joy reigned there, and no tempest of feeling could evermore ruffle its shining bosom. At least one human being on that morning was in harmony with itself and with God. It was a repetition of the first morning in Paradise when Adam sang hymns of joy to the Creator. The human race was once more brought into perfect harmony with its own nature and destiny through this descendant of Adam. The peaks of the mountains were no longer remote from heaven, but touched the borders of the celestial world. Christ had raised man up and brought heaven down. Who saw this wondrous creature on that wondrous morning, as He looked upon the scene of His passion? Perhaps some ragged wanderer, some lost child, some simple heart, worthier of the sight than apostle or monarch, looked upon Him "from whose face the earth and heaven fled

away, and there was no place found for them.” —Apoc. xx. 11. “And he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is called, the Word of God.”—Apoc. xix. 13.

II. THE CITY OF JERUSALEM.

1. We can imagine that the Lord walked to the summit of Calvary and gazed upon the vacant crosses, then on the city, sleeping, indifferent, satisfied with its crimes because great gain had come from them. There is nothing more terrible in our nature than the limitations which hide from us a scene like this: nothing more frightful in history than this spectacle of the risen Christ looking across from the hill of doom to the city of doom. The citizens are sleeping, the powerful city is in the heavy sleep of the last hours of night, the laborer and the exhausted sinner are as men dead: while the greatest wonder of history is taking place at the gates of the city. And there is no one to see, to spread the news, to praise God in behalf of men. “Alas! alas! that great city, which was clothed with fine linen and purple and scarlet, and was gilt with gold and precious stones and pearls.” —Apoc. xviii. 16. Surely the eyes of Christ must have disturbed in his sleep the ambitious Caiphas, as he tossed on his couch and assured himself that the death of “this usurper” had

saved Israel to him and his family for many years. Were not his guards all about that tomb which carried the seal of Roman power? But this was the fatal day, the third day, when the Christ of Galilee would rise again, according to His own prophecy! Poor wretch! Faithless priest! Type of all the faithless leaders of men! Thy restless thought, thy wide-open eyes, the scorn of sleep for thy pillow this night, are omens of thy future rather than the straining of unsettled nerves. The shadow of the Crucified rests on thee and thine forever. "And the false prophet shall be tormented day and night for ever."—Apoc. xx. 10. So also with the false king who slept his debauch away in the palace of the Herods. It was in his power to have saved two great souls, the Christ and His precursor. Poor wretch! Despicable! Type of meanness and dirt and weakness crowned! It is the punishment of Caiphas to be coupled with thee: and thy punishment not to have known enough to recognize the sun when it shone upon thee. "There is an evil that I have seen under the sun, as it were by an error proceeding from the face of the prince: a fool set in high dignity, and the rich sitting beneath."—Eccles. x. 5, 6.

2. The palace of Pilate rose proudly before the eyes of Christ. Surely the power of those eyes broke down the shaken wall of the Roman's indifference. Had all the circumstances of the

trial, all the reports that followed it, the impression made by "this just man" on the governor and his wife, faded away? We have no evidence to prove any further interest on the part of Pilate in his victim. He had his career to make sure, and the priests had threatened him with Cæsar. One would think that secretly he might have followed up the Crucified to see how many further wonders appeared in His life. That he did not is proof how thoroughly the selfish can blind themselves to their own interest by utter devotion to that interest. He sleeps now secure of Cæsar for the moment, and a greater than Cæsar gazes on his heart from that hill which he thought led, though disagreeably, to final success. "He is troubled in the vision of his heart, as if he had escaped in the day of battle." —Ecclus. xl. 7. It is his punishment, too, that he made a friend of a fool, and tripped meanly before a knave, by his halting treatment of the Man whom he desired to judge honestly. And in the slums beneath his palace the robber is sleeping, Barabbas, admired among men that he should be preferred to the Son of God. Probably he lay that night in one of his favorite dens, hilarious with joy and bad wine, dreaming of future robberies and base pleasures; yet not near so base in his degradation as Caiphas, Herod, and Pilate; for he had done nothing against the Son of God, while they should have

been able and eager to recognize divinity, or at least to protect innocence. They had proved to the robber how easily the innocent are destroyed and the unjust protected through the meanness of princes, and so encouraged him to renew his evil ways.

3. Not far from where Barabbas lay, the calm eyes of the risen Christ saw the bowed form of a timid friend, Peter, the courageous and unfaithful, all things in a moment, in a frenzy wounding Malthus, fearlessly entering the palace, timidly denying the Lord, weeping like Magdalen, first to brave the terrors of the open tomb. He looked with love upon him, for this was His rock, in spite of all human weakness; this was the foundation upon which the Church was to be built—the strong, loving nature, with high ideals, stubborn to madness, never knowing defeat, and needing only the grace of the Spirit to become the impregnable fortress of the faith. He was weeping now, but the light of Christ's love shone upon these tears and made them beautiful. Here was hope. But in the field of the potter lay a dead and rejected apostle, on whose face still rested undried the tears of despair. The look of Christ rests upon him also, but a different gaze from that yearning glance which followed Judas in his flight from the hall of the last supper. After the death of the Son of God, after the piteous fall of Adam, no other

tragedy of human life can possess such bitterness as this of Judas. Called to the highest, he fell into the abyss of Satan, repeating on earth the treason of heaven. He slept now the sleep of eternal despair, and all about slept the wearied multitude with the Beautiful Christ gazing upon them from Calvary's hill. "Before him there were none so beautiful, even from the beginning."—Ecclus. xlv. 15. "His remembrance shall be sweet as honey in every mouth, and as music at a banquet of wine."—Ecclus. xlix. 2.

III. THE MODERN JERUSALEM.

1. It is an old saying that history repeats itself in the course of time. Strangely beautiful and terrible as were the scene and the characters of the resurrection morning, each generation since that time has beheld its repetition with every Easter dawn. Behold on every altar the Christ of the Resurrection, and around Him the selfish, indifferent, sleeping world. For three years He had illumined Judea with His teaching, His miracles, His love; until all men talked of Him, and brought their sick to Him, and went home rejoicing in Him. For nineteen centuries He has lived on our altars in the sight of the whole world, working wonders that attract the attention and hold the interest of all classes of men. He stood on the hill of Calvary alone

and unseen: He has stood here seen and known. The great Church, the everlasting throne of Peter, the shrines and sanctuaries of the civilized world, the arts employed in decorating them, the sanctification of the millions that have worshipped Him, the wonders of holiness blooming among them, have all been His work. No one denies it; all admire it. But more indifferent than the people who accepted His favors and saw Him crucified with little regret, the modern witnesses of His glory dispute in His divine presence whether He ever existed. As He stood looking at the city of Jerusalem the first Easter morning, so does He stand to-day calmly wondering at the children of men: so great and yet so little—great in their own conceit, little in their richest achievement. With their eyes full upon the Christ they cannot see Him. "There is no remembrance of former things: nor indeed of those things which hereafter are to come: nor shall there be any remembrance with them that shall be in the latter end."—Eccles. i. 11. "A generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness."—Prov. xxx. 13.

2. The world sleeps in the presence of the Christ because it desires not to know Him, and the heaviest sleepers are those who play the parts of Caiphas, Herod, and Pilate. At this moment the earth is full of the unscrupulous

priests of heresy, quite ready to crucify the Christ of the Eucharist. Luther played the rôle of Caiphas with terribly splendid results, and enjoyed the crucifixion when the worst of it was over; as Arius played it before him, and Cranmer after him, for the sake of such honors as went with the treason. These are the illustrious examples; but who shall name the secret thousands who have even envied these arch-villains their wretched opportunity? Herod has had a thousand imitators in his meanness among the little and dirty great ones of the world; as in the case of numberless princes who thought the Christ was a passing charlatan, and sold Him, or mocked Him, as suited their lazy fancy; the nobles of many races in all times who were first to adopt error if it gave them profit or advancement, and who would rejoice at a daily opportunity so rich in revenue as the beheading of a John the Baptist or the crucifying of a Messias. Pilate would find a goodly company of his kind among the rulers of men, and would not need to blush for his following; nor would they need to fear comparison with their master. As for Judases, history provides such examples as Julian the Apostate and Henry VIII. of England. They are all present—the rabble, the soldiers, the faithful friends, the centurion, the weeping women, Barabbas, and Peter. But now Peter is no longer weeping: he is the rock against

which time and Satan dash themselves in vain. The modern Jerusalem is like the old. "How is the faithful city, that was full of judgment, become a harlot? justice dwelt in it, but now murderers. Thy silver is turned into dross: thy wine is mingled with water. Thy princes are faithless, companions of thieves: they all love bribes, they run after rewards."—Isa. i. 21–23.

3. As it was on the first day of the week, as it is now, so shall it be on the morning of the general resurrection, when the human race stands before its King for the judgment of justice: with this exception, that all dissimulation and ignorance shall then be laid aside. Herod and Caiphas and Pilate will know their Judge and themselves to perfection. "And they cast dust upon their heads, and cried, weeping and mourning, saying: Alas! alas! that great city, wherein all were made rich, that had ships at sea, by reason of her prices: for in one hour she is made desolate."—Apoc. xviii. 19. The Christ that stood on Calvary in the silent dawn, the Christ that stood on the altars of men for centuries—the same Christ will preside at the judgment, and not a soul but will be able to recognize Him in joy or in terror. "And his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many diadems, and he had a name written, which no man knoweth but himself. And he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood: and his name is

called, the Word of God.”—Apoc. xix. 12, 13. All men have some fear of this last terror in their hearts, but they employ the successes of life, or the very despair of life, to drive it from their hearts; and they pay honor to the men of learning who can reason away the vision of future justice. Nevertheless the vision remains, and the prophets cry in the streets of Jerusalem, and each generation puts them to death or kills them with indifference. “For I testify to every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any man shall add to these things God shall add to him the plagues written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life.”—Apoc. xxii. 18.

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